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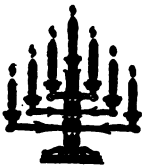

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MIZPAH,

Prayer and Friendship.

Mizpah: The Lord watch between me and thee while we are absent one from another.—GEN. xxxi. 49.

I have called you friends.—JESUS.

LAFAYETTE C. LOOMIS, A.M.

PHILADELPHIA:
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TO

THOSE WHO PRAY FOR THE LOVED WHOM THEY HOPE TO MEET
AND STILL LOVE IN HEAVEN,

THIS WORK

Is most Affectionately Inscribed.

PREFACE.

THERE is no hour more sacred to sincere friendship and affection, than the hour of prayer. A kind Providence has given to each of us, those around whom, entwine the strong tendrils of the heart. Instinctively we breathe their names in our supplications at the throne of mercy and forgiveness. In this prayer-intercourse of kindred spirits, Religion and Affection, alike, are nurtured up to a purer joy and a nobler life. It comforts and encourages the heart to know that friends, some perhaps far away, seek daily guidance from the Throne of Wisdom, and remember us on bended knee.

In this work proposes morning and evening Scripture Readings, and an evening Meditation. The Morning Readings embrace the Psalms twice, and the Evening, the New Testament once during the year. The Meditations are not expositions of text, but rather, devotional reflections,—generally upon the preceding Reading, and intended to follow the Scripture, and precede prayer. They are adapted to the closing moments of the day, except June, July, August, and September, which allude more frequently to twilight. Entire originality has been less an object than to aid in the hour of devotion: and I have selected freely whatever seemed adapted to this

Many of the Meditations have, also, special reference to associate reading with friends. Such a union in devotion makes us more faithful to our closets. It unites what we are, all of us, too ready to disjoin—reading of the Word and prayer. It serves, through our strongest and tenderest emotions, to make us ministers of good to each other, in our pilgrimage to the Better Land.

To such as thus become Associates in prayer, be the number greater or less in each little circle, that all may become united into one great brotherhood, and thus, in part, fulfill our Master's will, "that we may all be one;" as far as may be, let the Morning devotion be between the hours of six and seven, and the Evening, nine and ten.

In a few instances, I have ventured in the Meditations to invite to united prayer, *all Associates*,—all who should, everywhere, thus read and pray together; feeling assured that such an act of Christian fellowship could not but be grateful to our hearts, and meet the approbation of our common Father.

Thus may Friendship and Affection, the Golden Chain that binds us to the true and loving, bind us also to the pure and good, and lead us on toward holiness and Heaven!

MIZPAH.

JANUARY.

First.

Morning Lesson.
Psalm i.

Evening Lesson.
Matt. i.

EVENING MEDITATION.

How mysterious is the earthly pilgrimage of immortal spirits! The soul, ever looking toward heaven, ever longing for its home in the better land, its rest in the bosom of its God, struggles amid its fetters to make its way over the high-road that leads from earth to Paradise. From each mountain-top, it throws its eager eyes future-ward, vainly essaying to discern what lies before it, and fondly picturing what enjoyments each year will bring.

Seest thou, my soul, from this summit of the year, dimly, far beneath thee, the smiling valley of the coming bud, and bloom, and harvest, and beyond, the bleak and snowy crested mountain-ridge of another winter?

Along the great highway of Time which stretches thence, cool garden-bowers shall woo thy long repose, the mellow song of birds and the smile of warm affection shall beguile thy lingering heart, yet somewhere must thou turn aside from the throng of busy life, and bid the loved a long farewell.

It may be thou shalt traverse all this vale, and stand upon yon snowy crest as thou dost now on this; or it may be that, in some sunny dell, kind friends shall tenderly, and with many bitter tears, hollow out thy narrow bed, and lay thy body down to sleep. There they may cover it with the verdant sod, and leave it to its rest, while, with torn and bleeding hearts, they strive to gird themselves again to life's saddened pilgrimage. Let me then, the little course I have to run, bind around my heart the Word of Life, that I may thence draw all my strength and wisdom.

And thou, my Associate and Friend, my fellow-pilgrim, give me thy hand, that we may together strive to lead each other in the way of life. If we both may finish another year, it will be well; but if not, may it still be well.

And wilt Thou, O merciful and ever-blessed Father, keep us Thine to the end of life, and bring us then to Thee.

Second.

Morning. Ps. ii. Evening. Matt. ii.

As I begin the new year, I would, first of all, resolve to rise more above the present and the temporal, and to gain within myself and to myself more of that spirit which pervades and controls all things in Heaven. A few days hence, and I hope to be one of the pure and blessed inhabitants of that unsullied Realm. Let me, then, with every power which I possess, now strive to attain to a like state of thought, feeling, and affection.

What is it that constitutes the joy of heaven, but that love, purity, and kindness, which robes all with unutterable glory there! How doth my soul long to be filled with these heavenly influences! How would it rise up even to the very dwelling-place of its Maker, and there yield itself to His entire control! Shall I ever be able in this life to attain to this great blessing? May I not be permitted to live even in the light of Thy smile continually?

O my Savior, come Thou, and lift me up to Thyself, that I may be filled with Thy glory and excellence, that henceforth I may be Thine and only Thine. May the gate of heaven, even in this life, be ever open to my spirit!

Third.

Morning. Ps. iii. Evening. Matt. iii.

How little have I accomplished during the past year, in the name and for the honor of my Master! Was a single soul led, through my influence, to see the error of his ways, and to yield his heart to the Savior? Is there one who will rise up in eternity, and call me blessed for what I have done? Have I not the rather to fear that some may have stumbled through my example, my neglect?

I would not thus pass another year! I would lead some soul to Thee, O my Savior! Wilt Thou honor my labors, O thou Redeemer of the world, that, in the little time yet left to me, I may bring back some of Thy straying ones! Permit me to gather a few sheaves for the garner of the Lord, even if it be but a few.

Strengthen my hands, encourage my heart, and enable me to feel that my only purpose here, is, to do Thy will. In this beginning of the year, would I enter anew into that living covenant, whereby all that I have, and am, and hope to be, may be fully and freely Thine. This evening may I be able thus to covenant with Thee, O Thou who art my all.

Fourth.

Morning. Pa. iv. Evening. Matt. iv.

SWEET, holy evening prayer! When earth, lulled to a cradle calm, seems reposing on the bosom of its Creator, how the soul wings its way upward far beyond the vesper star to the home of all its hopes and aspirations! Then do angel visitants seem nearest to our touch, then do our hearts seem most distinctly to catch the whisperings of the loved and lost, and then do our thoughts turn in tenderest recollections to those dear ones still left us.

Prayer and affection, like sister angels, hand in hand wing their way to all whose images live in our hearts, and then upward to the throne of our common Father. Then does the Savior seem most precious to the soul, speaking words of comfort to our sorrowing hearts, and bidding us to dry our tears, for that soon He will come and take us to Himself.

Beloved Associate, whose name is often on my lips in prayer, and whose happiness ever in my heart, may I not think, that, at this blessed, holy hour, thou dost sometimes whisper my unworthy name to our Heavenly Father? Wheresoever thou art, to-night will I remember thee.

Fifth.

Morning. Ps. v.

Evening. Matt. v. 1–26.

SAVIOR, ever art Thou to be adored, that, in Thy first teachings, Thou didst open Thy mouth in blessings, giving us these divine truths. Here Thou hast taught us who are the truly blessed. Let me often recall and meditate upon this truth, that only the Pure in Heart shall see God. I would seek that perfect purity of thought which cannot contemplate sin without filling the soul with pain — even the purity of angel thoughts. Only this can enable me to see with joy Him who is immaculate.

How often do I have to lament the impurity of my thoughts; and how vile must I appear in the sight of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold evil or to look upon iniquity! O Thou who canst purify and sanctify, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean. Now be pleased, O Lamb of God, that didst die to take away the sin of the world, to wash me in that Fountain opened in the house of David for sin and uncleanness. Let me now feel it applied to my soul, assuring me that though my sins were as scarlet they are whiter than snow though they were as crimson they shall be as wool.

Sixth.

Morning. Ps. vi.

Evening. Matt. v. 27.

"LOVE your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to those that hate you, and pray for those which despitefully use you and persecute you."

How repulsive to the unregenerate heart is this lesson, and how difficult, often, to those who have been made partakers of the grace of Christ! It is easy to love those who love us, but how difficult, those that hate us. How doth the glory and divinity of the Savior here shine forth! It is human to love and forgive our friends; divine, our enemies.

O Thou who art the Brightness of the Father, infuse into my heart, and into the hearts of all Thy disciples, this better spirit. May I rise wholly above this selfish partiality, and put on that charity which is the bond of perfectness. How often is my spirit ruffled, and how do bitter words rise up from my heart, and, alas, sometimes escape my lips, when those that hate me speak evil of me or my friends!

O merciful Savior, give me of Thy spirit, that I may be filled with forgiveness, and all the excellencies of Thyself.

Seventh.

Morning. Ps. vii.

Evening. Matt. vi. 1-18.

MORNING and evening will I commune in secret with Him who is my defence and my strength, unbosoming my inmost soul, and unfolding all that is within. At these hours, especially, would I seek to enter the inner shrine of communion with my Savior. There may I ever meet the Blessed One, and in the light of His spotless purity examine my own thoughts and desires. There may the world, its pride and sin, its lure and lust, never come.

I would teach my heart at all times and in all places, in joy as in sorrow, in the sunlight as in the shadow, in the forest where the birds carol praise, in the fields where the flowers image forth His goodness, and in the quick pulsations of my own happy heart, as well as in human temples, or at the portal of the tomb, to bow before the Majesty on High in supplication, praise, thanksgiving, and affection.

Often, amid the labors of the day, would I turn my thoughts up to the hills whence cometh my strength. My closing prayer at night shall be that taught me by my Savior and my mother.

Eighth.

Morning. Ps. viii.

Evening. Matt. vi. 19.

"How much better is it to get wisdom than gold!" Have I sought this day more earnestly to lay up treasure in heaven than on earth? Have not my thoughts been almost wholly given to the temporal—to what I shall eat, and drink, and put on? These must indeed absorb much of our attention, yet only as the necessary concomitants of our pilgrimage. May our hearts, our hopes, and our home, ever be in heaven; and may all life's labors be that we may, at last, attain its rest, that we may by every act be better fitted for its excellence. O how wholly do we live for time!

"May my treasure be in heaven, and my conversation there, and my heart there. Translate me from under the influence of things seen and sensible to that of things unseen and eternal. Give me, O Lord, so to live above the world by living a life of faith on Thy well-beloved Son.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, after which, with a superabounding goodness that is altogether celestial and godlike, it is promised that all other things, without seeking or solicitude on our part, will be added unto us."

Ninth.

Morning. Ps. ix.

Evening. Matt. vii.

COMPASSIONATE SAVIOR, permit me not to build upon a false foundation. If I am not such as Thou wouldst have me be, be pleased to mould and fashion me into Thine own entire image. Do as Thou wilt with me. May I be a passive instrument in Thine Omnipotent hands. Thou wouldst have me holy, O Lord, my God, wilt Thou preserve me that I may not be of those who shall persist in evil unto eternal ruin. I bless Thee that we know of a surety that Thou wilt lead all that put their trust in Thee, in the way of life. O lead and guide me, and my Associate, and all my friends, to Thyself; may all our words and thoughts be with that singleness of heart, and purity of purpose that Thou canst ever abide with us. With the lowly and contrite Thou dost make Thine abode.

"O God, the strength of all those who put their trust in Thee; mercifully accept our prayers: and because, through the weakness of our moral nature, we can do no good thing without Thee, grant us the help of Thy grace, that in keeping Thy commandments we may please Thee both in will and deed; through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Tenth.

Morning. Ps. x. Evening. Matt. viii.

"And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him."

There are no depths of transgression God's great love will not cover; no heights of iniquity God's great mercy will not reach. It has a ransom for every penitent, it is abashed by none: it offers forgiveness to the greatest sinner and expiation for the greatest sin.

It is still true that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, even, says the Apostle Paul, "the chiefest." The glad news is, that there is instant forgiveness for every man if he will; there is no reason in the height, none in the depth, why every man should not be forgiven that hears the Gospel; only we must come down from the lofty platform of self-righteousness, and lay aside the grand pretension, and submit to be washed in the same stream with poor Rahab, and to be clothed with the same righteousness with the woman at Jacob's well, and to walk to heaven in the same path that has been beaten smooth by the chiefest of sinners, as well as by the greatest and best of saints.

Cumming.

Eleventh.

Morning. Pa. xi.

Evening. Matt. ix. 1-18.

JESUS came to heal the sick and weary soul. I came to call erring, sinful man back to God, to H liness, and Heaven. He came not to scourge a punish us, but to teach us, and to offer us his sy pathy and friendship. Had he come to visit up us the punishment meet for our transgressions, h lost, how hopeless, would have been our conditio Now would I come unto Thee, my Savior, to a knowledge Thy goodness and to render Thee t poor offering of my gratitude and affection. Th hast said the offering of the humble heart Thou w not despise. All unworthy as I am, Thou ha remembered me in Thy mercy.

"Let all other love be subordinate to Thine. I Thou be my chiefest joy. May Thy service be n delight. May my heart become a little sanctua whence the incense of praise, and love, and thank giving is ascending continually. May it glow wi holy zeal to promote Thy cause, and testify of Th grace. Remembering all that Thou hast done f me, may I be animated to make a more entire co secration and surrender of all I am and have to Th glory."

Twelfth.

Morning. Ps. xii.

Evening. Matt. ix. 18.

Am I one, and thou, my Associate, art thou one of the few whom the Master has called to labor in His vineyard? Have I sought to labor for Him to-day? Have I wrought a single act for Him during all its hours?

How prone I am to think I can do nothing—that if I make the attempt, it will prove fruitless—that others are better adapted to outward labor! Nay, my soul, these are not questions for thee to weigh. Learn to ask, What saith the Master? and learn still more, to do with joy whatsoever He may bid.

Let us, my Associate, strive, this evening, to yield ourselves more fully to the leadings of the Spirit of Christ. Yea, O Lord, at this hour, draw near and visit us with Thy grace. Let us hear Thy voice whispering words of encouragement and confidence to our hearts. May we ever go forth walking by faith, not by sight, feeling and knowing that the Lord will guide and protect.

Make us, Heavenly Father, more faithful in all our labors, more obedient in our walk and conversation, and more Christlike in spirit. Not only at the hour of prayer, but in all the acts of life, may we be Thine.

Thirteenth.

Morning. Ps. xiii.

Evening. Matt. x. 1–23.

Not the Apostles only were sent forth as lambs in the midst of wolves, but every one who is seeking to follow the Great Shepherd through this wilderness. Shall we, then, go carelessly and listlessly onward; or shall we not rather be ever on our guard, lest sin steal unawares within our hearts, and gain a lodgement? Bestow upon me, O Lord, Thy protecting grace, that I may keep my thoughts and my heart holy unto Thee.

"My soul, be on thy guard;
Ten thousand foes arise;
The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the skies.

"O watch, and fight, and pray;
The battle ne'er give o'er;
Renew it boldly every day,
And help Divine implore.

"Ne'er think the vict'ry won,
Nor lay thine armor down:
The work of faith will not be done
Till thou obtain the crown.

"Then persevere till death
Shall bring thee to thy God;
He'll take thee, at thy parting breath,
To His divine abode."

Fourteenth.

Morning. Ps. xiv.

Evening. Matt. x. 24.

O SPOTLESS Lamb of God, who didst die to take away the sins of the world, we are utterly unworthy of Thee. Though we should love Thee more than father or mother, though we should take up our cross and follow Thee, we should still be utterly unworthy of Thee. But Thou hast redeemed us and made us worthy by washing us in Thy precious blood. This is our only worth—this all our plea for Thy mercy and care—"for me the Savior died." Help me, therefore, O Thou that dost number even the hairs of our heads, help me to love Thee supremely, and ever cheerfully to take up my cross and follow Thee.

As I come to my bed of rest, I would repose my soul on the bosom of its Redeemer, feeling that I love him with an affection which absorbs and controls every other. Now, O blessed Jesus, grant to my longing heart that without which it cannot rest, the assurance that I am Thine. Bless Thou all my friends, and may they all safely dwell beneath the protecting arm of Thy Providence. Be around us in our slumbers. Associate, may thy Savior be with thee at this hour of prayer.

Fifteenth.

Morning. Ps. xv. Evening. Matt. xi.

How naturally do we repose confidence in those we love! In danger or affliction how hopefully do we turn to them for sympathy or protection! Yet is there ever a feeling of insecurity attending these earthly trusts. Estrangement, accident, or death, may, in an unexpected moment, interpose to the realization of all that we had hoped. But when we come to Him who has promised to make perfect our way, and preserve and bless us, we rest in an unwavering confidence that His mercy and faithfulness are even as He, "from everlasting to everlasting."

How excellent is Thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore do we trust Thee; therefore will we not fear. Thou dost order all our steps. Though we fall, we shall not be utterly cast down, for Thou dost uphold us; though poor and needy, Thou dost remember us. And when toil, and care, and strife, and disappointment, and sorrow, choke our hearts and quench the light of every hope and joy, we bless Thee, O merciful Savior, that Bethlehem's Star still lights us through the darkness, and Thy words still echo to our weary souls, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Sixteenth.

Morning. Ps. xvi.

Evening. Matt. xii. 1-21.

WHAT a spirit of quiet meekness, tenderness, and compassion, does the Savior continually manifest—scattering blessings wherever He goes, yet without display or ostentation—despising none, even though weak as a bruised reed! His heart yearned over all those whom the Father had given Him, and His hands were ever extended to aid the feeble and to bless the sorrowing.

O my Savior, as one of the most undeserving of Thy children, I would fain come to Thee, and, falling at Thy feet, implore Thy favor. Thou seest that my life is one continued error. There is no wisdom nor strength within me. When I have done all that I can do, it is nothing; when I have sought my highest judgments, they are foolishness; my purity is vileness, and my devotion but coldness.

Shall I ever know the unspeakable joy of being free from these weaknesses? If such excellence is to be the reward of Thine own in Heaven, then will I, with a new zeal and courage, address myself to an unceasing warfare with these evils, in the assurances of Thy Word that we shall reap, in due season, if we faint not.

Seventeenth.

Morning. Ps. xvii.

Evening. Matt. xii. 22.

CAN it be that I, a being so sinful, so unworthy, am a member of my Heavenly Father's household! Can it be that I, a child of ignorance and mortality, whose abode is upon the earth, am the brother of Christ! Shall I ever attain to that purity, that excellence, that exceeding honor and glory, which will permit fraternal love and intercourse with Jesus and the Angels? My heart swells with gratitude and thanksgiving. Of Thine own exhaustless goodness, Thou dost exalt us to fellowship with Thyself, O Lamb of God.

O Christian, does thy heart, in the toils of thy pilgrimage, sometimes fail thee? In the perplexities of mortal care, dost thou sometimes yield to discouragements? Bethink thee of what thou now art, and of that to which Jesus has welcomed thee hereafter. Lift up thine eye of faith, and behold thyself a few years, perhaps days, hence. Thou wilt not be here, but all thy trial, thy sorrow and tears, will be lost in the incomprehensible glory and happiness of thy existence. O my Associate, if we should meet no more on earth, may it be ours to meet in that Better Land!

Eighteenth.

Morning. Ps. xviii. 1-19. Evening. Matt. xiii. 1-23.

I WOULD have my heart that good ground into which, the seeds of Truth falling, shall take an abiding root. To this end let me ever come to Thy Word with the simplicity and teachableness of a little child. May I not come seeking to vindicate my own theories, speculations, or prejudices, to palliate or excuse my failings, but as to the Oracles of God, saying, What doth the Scriptures teach? Which is the way of wisdom and truth?

Let me not come to my morning and evening reading as to a book or to a becoming religious formula or ceremonial, but as seeking that wisdom for the day which can guide me aright, and teach me how to avoid error and attain to a better life. May the Holy Scriptures be the man of my counsel in all the interests and duties of life, both temporal and spiritual.

O may I learn to love more this precious Word of Truth! May my heart be open to all its admonitions, its warnings, and its censures. May I never seek to ward off or shield myself from its truths, but bind them as amulets around my heart, as gems of priceless worth.

Nineteenth.

Morning. Ps. xviii. 20–36. Evening. Matt. xiii. 24–43.

WATER, Heavenly Father, with the dews of Thy divine grace, the truth within our hearts, and even though it be as grains of mustard seed, it shall grow up and overshadow all the ground. Help us so to keep the garden of our hearts, that, in the day when the angels shall gather out of His kingdom all things that do offend, we may be found among those righteous which shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of the Father.

O God of all goodness, my heart is filled with an overpowering sense of Thy mercy and favor. Let me bow down and pour out my soul in thankfulness for those hopes of glory which Thou hast proffered to fallen man. That I may be an accepted inhabitant of Heaven, is too great for me to receive. Thou hast my heart, and thou shalt have my life; yet I am too unworthy. But Jesus is worthy, blessed be His name forever!

O my Associate, shall we, yea, shall we, so soon be in that realm of glory, of purity, and happiness? O my soul, bless thou the Lord! What hath He wrought that thou mightest be an heir of immortal joy!

Twentieth.

Morning. Ps. xviii. 37. Evening. Matt. xiii. 44.

HAVE I truly found this precious pearl? And hast thou, my esteemed friend? Have we sold all that we possessed that we might gain it? Can we look within the sanctuary of our hearts, and see it there in all its excellence? Then let us guard it as the only certain treasure we can carry with us to the future world. The wealth, the pleasures, and enjoyments of earth, all bear the taint of mortality. In Thy forgiving favor alone, O blessed Jesus, hath the soul its true riches.

"I would give up all for Christ. This day have I felt the preciousness of union with Him. May He be to me as a hidden treasure. May I abide in Him that He may abide in me, and cause me to abound in much fruit.

O my God, let Him be unto me as the pearl of great price—seeing that he who hath the Son hath life. O Lord, may I be found among the good on that day when Christ cometh to make up His jewels, severing the wicked from among the just. Let me be well instructed in the mysteries of Thy kingdom, and let the Word of Christ dwell in me richly in all wisdom."

Twenty-First.

Morning. Ps. xix. Evening. Matt. xiv.

How swiftly speed the weeks bearing my life into that past which buries all things in its ruins! Has there been, to-day, one good deed of mine recorded in heaven; or have I so employed all my thoughts that I have not treasured a single golden act for eternity, so that, amid the wrecks of time, all will be lost?

O thou God of mercy and compassion, oppressed by a painful sense of my constant errors, my ignorance, and want of moral courage to do what I ought, I cast myself upon Thy clemency, upon Thy forgiving grace. I have nothing to plead for my transgressions but the name and merits of my Intercessor. O for His sake remember me in mercy. I come to ask of Thee strength and wisdom. In Thine abundant goodness, give me to know the true, the good, and the holy, and then more especially—for herein is my most manifest weakness—give me the heart, the courage, the will to seek the true and holy.

O restrain me when I see the right, but follow after the wrong. Help me, O Lord. Thou who art stronger than my own heart, save, or I perish.

Twenty-Second.

Morning. Ps. xx.

Evening. Matt. xv. 1-20.

As fades the day upon my vision, bearing to the eternal world the record of its words, and deeds, and thoughts, O Thou who art worshiped in spirit and in truth, I come to Thee seeking that hidden intercourse which Thou wilt grant to the pure and contrite. I know, Heavenly Father, that, too often, my worship is but the form; that often, when I come before Thee, it is merely because it is my custom; that while my lips repeat the prayer, my thoughts are far from Thee; that when I confess, I do not repent; that when I pray to be delivered from evil, I do not purpose myself to avoid it. When I meditate on this my weakness and inconsistency, my heart is pained and overcome with shame, and I cannot stand in Thy presence, O God, who hast seen it all, and who knowest me. Yet, O Lord, my strength and hope, is there not within me the wish and the earnest of a truer life? Yea, O Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee, and that I would not live thus. Help me, Divine Savior, that I may end this divided life, and give my heart to Thee alone. In a new consecration let me find that strength which shall persevere unto holiness.

Twenty-Third.

Morning. Ps. xxi.

Evening. Matt. xv. 21.

I REJOICE to know, when my heart is overwhelmed and in perplexity, that I can ever look unto Thee as a Rock that is higher than I.

Lord increase my faith—let it rise above all difficulties and all trials. Let these drive me closer to Him who has promised to make me more than conqueror. Let them quicken my longings for the true home of my soul above. May it be my grand ambition here to be a pilgrim in everything—pitching my tent day by day nearer heaven, imbibing every day more of the pilgrim character, and longing more for the pilgrim's rest. May I be enabled to say, with an increasingly chastened spirit, of a passing world, "Here I have no abiding City." May this assurance dry all tears and reconcile to all sorrows, "I am journeying unto the place of which the Lord hath said, I will give it you."

God of Bethel, I commend to Thee all my beloved friends. Shield them by Thy protecting providence. Give them every needed blessing in the present life, and in the world to come life everlasting.

MORNING WATCHES.

Twenty-Fourth.

Morning. Pa. xxii. 1-19.

Evening. Matt. xvi.

INDULGENCE weakens the soul, makes it more ease-loving, more selfish, less careful of the good of others, and unnerves it for the stern conflicts of life. The Christian pilgrimage is one of self-denial. Our Savior has taught us, if we would be His disciples, we *must* deny ourselves, and take up our cross and follow Him.

Wherein have I denied myself to-day? What cross have I borne for His sake? Have I relinquished a single enjoyment of life, a gratification, a luxury of food or apparel, that I might have the more wherewith to forward my Master's kingdom in the world? Or am I reposing on beds of ease and listlessness, while His children are famishing for the bread of life.

May I never forget that I *can* do good, and that I *must* do good; that all I expend in enjoyment is lost—while all that I bestow in my Master's name is treasured up in Heaven. O my Lord and Savior, wilt Thou at this hour so fill me with Thy Spirit that henceforth my only aim of thought and life shall be to follow Thee. O how many of us, like Peter, follow Thee afar off.

Twenty-fifth.

Morning. Ps. xxii. 20.

Evening. Matt. xvii.

O THOU well-beloved Son of the Father, I would meet Thee and my chosen friends, at this hour of our evening prayer, on the Mount of Transfiguration. Come Thou so into my soul that I may be able to leave earth and all its cares far below, and ascend so near to Thyself that I may discern that face resplendent as the sun, and that vesture white as snow. My soul doth long for a higher and more hidden communion with the object of its love. It would behold more of Thy excellent glory. Let the light beam in upon my darkened spirit. May the veil of a fleshly heart no longer obscure!

Come, O my Savior, unscale my eyes that I may see, unstop my ears that I may hear, and touch my heart that I may feel. Wash all its guilt away, that, in its purity, it may the better comprehend Thy transcendent glory, for Thou only art great, and glorious, and good!

May my soul be so enamored of its Savior that it may ever say with Peter, "Lord, it is good for us to be here." And wilt Thou, Blessed Jesus, so keep us in the arms of Thy merciful care, that where Thou art, shall ever be to us a Heaven.

Twenty-Sixth.

Morning. Pa. xxiii.

Evening. Matt. xviii. 1–20.

ASSOCIATES, let us read again the nineteenth and twentieth verses, and, as we read, may our hearts warm with gratitude and thankfulness, that in bestowing the inexpressible boon of prayer in His name, the Savior conferred His special approbation upon the united supplication of sincere affection. Let us thank Him that he has not only permitted us to unite our hearts in the strong ties of friendship, and to recognize this affection in His presence, but that He has given it the claim to His richest favors.

In grateful commemoration of this blessed instruction, let us, Associates, this evening, be especially united in supplicating blessings upon our fraternity—*upon all Associates everywhere.*

"We can never pray as we ought for ourselves if we do not pray for others. The heart grows cold, and hard, and selfish. It will be found, that, in proportion as Christians are earnest in their supplications for others, their devotions will be profitable to their own souls. Our bosoms warm and expand in praying for our fellow creatures."

OLIN.

Twenty-Seventh.

Morning. Ps. xxiv. Evening. Matt. xviii. 21.

How divine are these teachings upon forgiveness—how far above the native monitions of the human heart! What an expanded basis of benevolence and kindness does the Savior here present to the Christian, upon which not only to rest his hopes, but to rear the structure of his character. To what enlarged charity, what continued long-suffering, what unwearied patience, in our intercourse with our fellow mortals, are we called!

Are these the principles by which I am constantly controlled? Am I forgiving and patient, or hasty and resentful? Do I, in spirit, really forgive those that trespass against me? Is there not often a lingering ill-will against those who have wronged me? Is there no remembrance of evil more than I hope the Savior to retain against me in the great day of judgment? Am I ready to be forgiven by Him in the manner in which I forgive others? O how do these truths take hold upon my heart!

O Lord, Thou that dost know the heart, search me and try me. Root out every evil thought, and reign Thou within. Then and then only shall I be Christlike.

Twenty-Eighth.

Morning. Pa. xxv.

Evening. Matt. xix.

It is scarce conceivable how strait the way is wherein God leads them that follow him; and how dependent on Him we must be, unless we are wanting in our faithfulness to Him.

It is hardly credible of how great consequence before God the smallest things are; and what great inconveniences sometimes follow those which appear to be light faults.

As a very little dust will disorder a clock, and the least sand will obscure our sight, so the least grain of sin which is upon the heart will hinder its right motion toward God. As the most dangerous winds may enter little openings, so the devil never enters more dangerously than by little, unobserved incidents, which seem to be nothing, yet insensibly open the heart to great temptation.

It is good to review ourselves from time to time, by closely examining the state of our souls, as if we had never done it before; for nothing tends more to the full assurance of faith, than to keep ourselves, by this means, in humility, and the exercise of all good works.

WESLEY.

Twenty-Ninth.

Morning. Ps. xxvi. Evening. Matt. xx.

ASSOCIATES, are we laborers in the vineyard of the Lord? Have we, in response to His call, gone forth into the world as His servants, to do His bidding; to toil on with diligence and faithfulness till He shall say it is enough? Or, having assumed the duties of a servant, am I but an idler?

What have I wrought this week past? Have my hands hung listlessly, or have I striven with all my power to do His entire will? I would examine my heart with faithful circumspection. Is there nothing that I have left undone? No duty from which I have excused myself needlessly and sinfully? Do I not, the rather, find nothing done, and everything undone? And if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart.

O Lord, Thou compassionate Master, how faithless I have been! How slow to yield my hands to Thy service, and how much slower my heart! How readily, and for how feeble causes, do I turn aside from the path of duty and labor! How much remains to be done within my own bosom! Help me, O Thou my strength, to give myself more fully, in all I have and am, to Thee.

Thirtieth.

Morning. Ps. xxvii.

Evening. Matt. xxi. 1-22.

KIND and compassionate Father, at the close of another day, my soul, turning away again from earth, would commune with Thee. Thou alone art my comfort, my strength, my hope, and my portion. I come to Thee confessing my shortcomings, my proclivities to evil, and my want of affection. Yet, O blessed Jesus, I would be more fully given up to Thee in a deeper and more effectual spirit-baptism. Now be pleased to breathe upon me, that I may receive the Holy Ghost, and my heart be renewed in righteousness.

I am not satisfied with these meagre attainments. In the strength of an entire regeneration I would seek a more complete victory over the evil propensities within. My soul doth long for the purity, the freedom, and holiness of Heaven—for the abiding witness that I am wholly Christ's. And now, O Lord, come, visit me, and all those near to me. Make us all Thy children in all meekness and simplicity, in all zeal and faithfulness, in all purity and affection. May this evening prayer be, to all our souls, a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

Thirty-first.

Morning. Ps. xxviii. Evening. Matt. xxi. 23.

THE month, how quickly fled—gone as a dream when one awaketh, and gone forever, with its record of thoughts and actions! Is there aught I would recall? Has that influence, which I would ever have a minister of good to others, been, by any carelessness, a minister of evil? Have I continually set forth the example of a perfect Christian? Have I been as a light upon a candlestick, making more manifest the ways of error and truth? or has my light been to others darkness? Have I striven daily to grow in grace, and to attain more to the perfect purity of our great Pattern?

O how much have I left undone that must now remain undone forever! How is my life speeding away on the wings of the wind, telling no tale of lasting import, leaving no work behind to encourage and benefit others! O let me awake from this slumber, and labor while the day lasts! Soon will my pilgrimage be ended, and the great work of life, I fear, be left all unaccomplished.

Come, O my Associate, give me thy hand again for greater diligence and faithfulness. Shall not the coming month render a better report to Heaven?

FEBRUARY.

First.

Morning. Ps. xxix.

Evening. Matt. xxii. 1-22.

As I come to the opening of a new month, my soul is oppressed with the brevity of this present existence, and with its overwhelming responsibilities. So much to be done, so much that I must do, so little already accomplished, and so little strength or wisdom within myself. O that I could feel that my soul rested on the Arm of its Strength—that I could put a more satisfactory trust in the overruling providence of God—that my heart might no longer give itself to unsatisfying longings, to restless fears, to absorbing and depressing anxiety and solicitude.

Yet do I know, that though Thou art just and swervest not, Thou also art compassionate, Thou art pitiful. Thou wilt spare us in Thy tenderness, even

though we have wrought out but little good, if our hearts, in their feebleness, have lifted up to Thee a sincere cry for aid.

O blessed Savior, my Savior, to Thee, to Thee alone does my heart aspire. It has no other hope, no other strength. O turn me not away, but in infinite compassion be Thou my guide, my support, and my comfort in days to come as in days past.

If, in the plenitude of Thy favor, I should be spared to close the month I now enter upon, may it be mine to feel that Thy preserving and sustaining grace has not been bestowed in vain. Sincerely and earnestly do I desire to live, O my compassionate Master, according to Thy will, to become wiser and better, and to feel more fully and more constantly within my heart that I meet Thy approval, O Thou whose favor is better than life. Daily may I walk with Thee, and daily feel that I am truly in the strait and narrow way, and, when the month has fled, with my added days, that I am nearer heaven.

But, O God of goodness, Maker of my body, and the Father of my spirit, if, in Thy ways of wisdom, this be the month when Thou shalt call me from the land of the living to meet Thee in the world beyond the tomb, O prepare me, by penitence, by obedience, and by faith in my Redeemer, for an hour and change so solemn.

Second.

Morning. Ps. xxx.

Evening. Matt. xxii. 23.

"THOU shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it—Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

Let these divine words be ineffaceably graven on the tablet of my heart. Thou art Love, and the whole duty of man is to love Thee and Thy creatures. May this ever be the grand touchstone by which I shall test every thought, action, and impulse. Pure love sanctifies every outbreathing of the soul, and without it nothing can be acceptable to the Divine. May I watch with an eye of incessant vigilance for the hidden roots of bitterness!

"Give me the love of Thyself; give me that love of my neighbor which is like unto the love of Thyself; and let mine be an angelic love, which it never can be without an angelic purity. O thou root and offspring of Jesse, give me to know Thee more and love Thee better." Yea, fill my soul with Thyself, that its every outgoing may be of Thine own infinite affection.

Third.

Morning. Ps. xxxi. 1-14.

Evening. Matt. xxiii. 1-22.

How ready is the heart to be satisfied with the form of godliness, while the spirit is altogether wanting—how ready to accept the shadow for the substance! Alas, how often does it welcome the heartless formality, as excusing the deeper spiritual obligation! With what insidious stealth do hypocrisy and pride wind their way into our bosoms, and, ere we are aware, nip the buddings of every germ of holiness!

O Thou that searchest the heart, let the light of Thy truth shine within, and discover to me my inner self. Let me see myself in Thy light. I would not dissemble, or attempt to hide myself from Thee; for Thou knowest me altogether. O grant that I may know myself better, that I may have a more becoming apprehension of my heart and life as seen in the eternal world.

This evening would I desire to make a faithful, honest, and searching self-examination. And, as I look to discern my errors, my motives, the true causes of all my life, wilt Thou, O my blessed Redeemer, be present to guide and control, to sanctify and bless.

Fourth.

Morning. Ps. xxxi. 15.

Evening. Matt. xxiii. 23.

THESE fearful denunciations teach us that, like a summer cloud, which, while distilling the gentlest showers upon the parched and thankful earth, holds within its bosom the terrific and vengeful shafts of death, so the Savior, while dropping words of mercy and compassion from His gracious lips, was commissioned to reveal, in language unmistakable, His Father's unalterable abhorrence of transgression, His treasured and unrestrained wrath against iniquity. Yet, in the midst of His displeasure, how does the tenderness of His soul ever manifest itself toward us! How doth He in wrath remember mercy, ever saying to us, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings; but ye would not."

To Thee, O my Savior, would my soul flee this evening. Beneath thy wing it rests in the heartfelt consciousness of perfect safety. O may I be enabled so to live that I may never see Thy frown, or know the terror of Thy displeasure! May it never be said of us, Associates, How often would I have gathered thee, but ye would not!

Fifth.

Morning. Ps. xxxii.

Evening. Matt. xxiv. 1-28.

MAY I be truly admonished what a fearful thing it is to receive retribution at the hands of the great God who governs the Universe! I would take this instruction home to my soul: that, though He bear long with us in kindness, He will surely visit upon us the punishment of our transgressions if we hide not ourselves in Christ. Because of His long forbearance, and of my own forgetfulness, may I not be led to turn aside from His commandments, saying, "Doth God know?" May a more penetrating sense of the omniscience and omnipresence of God pervade every act of life!

"Blessed God, it is to thine Almighty power that I flee. Behold me surrounded with difficulties and dangers, and stretch out thine omnipotent arm to save me," O Thou that savest by Thy right hand them that put their trust in Thee from those that rise up against them. "This day do I solemnly put myself under thy protection: exert thy power in my favor, and permit me to make the shadow of thy wings my refuge. Let thy grace be sufficient for me, and thy strength be made perfect in my weakness."

Sixth.

Morning. Ps. xxxiii. 1–11. Evening. Matt. xxiv. 29.

WHAT time soever the Master may call for me, may I be found with my loins girt about, faithfully engaged in His service, waiting His appearing. I am ever postponing to the future; promising to do to-morrow what I have neglected to-day; to live better next week than this; excusing myself this time, but with the fixed determination it shall be the last. Alas, alas! how do days, weeks, and months thus pass in negligence, idleness, and, must I not say, too often, transgression!

O my soul, knowest thou not, thou hast in thine own hands thine own eternal destiny? Knowest thou not, it will be what thou makest it? And has not the Master said, "Watch, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come?" O may I feel that now is my only time — that I must not count upon what I will do to-morrow! It may not be mine. Perchance even in the peaceful slumber of to-night, the Master may call me away.

God of mercy, spare me, and I will endeavor to be more faithful, and to seek, each day, more earnestly to fill up the measure of its duties, in the spirit of my Lord and Master.

Seventh.

Morning. Ps. xxxiii. 12.

Evening. Matt. xxv. 1–30.

LET my days always be closed in thy fear, and a sense of thy gracious presence. Meet me, O Lord, in mine evening retirements. May I choose the most proper time for them! May I delightfully attend to reading and prayer! And when I review my conduct, may I do it with an impartial eye! Let not self-love spread a false covering over it; but may I judge myself as one that expects to be judged of the Lord, and is very solicitous he may be approved by Thee, who searchest all hearts, and canst not forget any of thy works!

Let my prayer come daily before Thee as incense, and let the "lifting up of my hands be as the morning and evening sacrifice." May I resign my powers to sleep in sweet calmness and serenity, conscious that I have lived to God in the day, and cheerfully persuaded that I am accepted of Thee in Christ Jesus my Lord, and humbly hoping in thy mercy through Him. To Him, having done all, would I fly with humble acknowledgement that I am an unprofitable servant.

DR. DODDRIDGE.

Eighth.

Morning. Ps. xxxiv. 1-10. Evening. Matt. xxv. 31.

HAVE I been constituted, in my heavenly Father's household, an almoner of His favors? How have I ministered to His children? Are there no hungry to feed, no thirsty to refresh, no naked to clothe, no sick to visit, no poor to relieve, or ignorant to instruct? In this inclement season, how many poor little sufferers there are! How many bitter tears are wept by innocents in poverty and want! How many born into the lap of penury and crime, whose eyes open but to behold the miseries of life, whose hearts beat but to throb with its sorrows, and whose lives are prolonged but to taste the bread and waters of bitterness! And these, O my Father, are Thy children. These are Thine own loved ones, whom Thou hast made, and for whom Christ died. Is there nothing I may do for them? How much I might, were I disposed! I am ashamed, that while they suffer and I fare sumptuously, I bestow naught, not even of my superfluity, that they may be comforted. Associates, let us all to-morrow minister at least to one, remembering Jesus hath said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Ninth.

Morning. Ps. xxxiv. 11.

Evening. Matt. xxvi. 1-30.

How often art Thou, O Sinless One, wounded in the house of Thy friends! How often do those that eat and drink at Thy table rise up, depart, and betray Thee into the hands of Thine enemies! How often bring reproach upon Thy people and Thee! And how often do I, through negligence, inattention, or a momentary passion, dishonor Him who alone is my honor, my consolation, my joy, and my glory! How ungrateful have I been to Him, and how unworthy of Him who is ever my best and truest Friend, whose tenderness is altogether divine, and whose faithfulness knows no shadow of change!

O Thou unsullied Star of human perfectness, at this hour I come to Thee, and, in the warmth of a sincere and abiding faith, would rest in Thy guidance. With confession and with humiliation I present myself; yet with the assurance that Thou, merciful Redeemer, wilt forgive and receive me.

O my Savior, let me call Thee mine. Let me come to Thee and love Thee as my friend. Let me bring with me those I love on earth, and ask that here we may be friends with Thee and with each other, even as we hope to be in heaven.

Tenth.

Morning. Ps. xxxv. 1-17.

Evening. Matt. xxvi. 31-46.

LIKE the chastened light of evening, stealing over us with its flood of sad and tender recollections, does Gethsemane woo the weary Christian soul. From those silent olive-shades there ever comes to the spirit a softened voice, which, while it bids our hearts be strong, bows us down with sorrow. We look with terror and amazement on the stricken form of Jesus, but smile amid our tears that it was a Savior's love which made Him suffer for us. We tremble as we hear Him say, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me;" but our hearts are overborne with joy as we catch the submissive words of victory, "Thy will be done."

And when the idols of our affection are snatched away, and the world is left a blank and cheerless waste, and it seems to us we cannot thus be severed from our loved ones, Gethsemane, with its lessons of submission, consolation, elevating hope, and confiding love, comes whispering to our throbbing, bleeding hearts, "Thy will be done;" and, heavenward lifting up our sorrowing souls, we say, with trembling lips of love, O Father merciful and kind, "Thy will be done."

Eleventh.

Morning. Ps. xxxv. 18.

Evening. Matt. xxvi. 47.

O THOU who camest not to condemn, but to pity, to forgive, and to reclaim, if, in any unguarded moment of temptation, I have turned away from Thee, or denied Thee, wilt Thou, O Jesus, Thou that didst love Thine own to the end, that didst never reject the penitent, O wilt Thou turn Thine eye upon me, and recall me to Thyself!

Jesus, let Thy pitying eye
Call back a wandering sheep;
False to Thee, like Peter, I
Would fain like Peter weep.
Let me be by grace restored;
On me be all long-suff'ring shown;
Turn, and look upon me, Lord,
And break my heart of stone.

Savior, Prince, enthroned above,
Repentance to impart,
Give me, through Thy dying love,
The humble, contrite heart;
Give what I have long implored,
A portion of thy grief unknown;
Turn, and look upon me, Lord,
And break my heart of stone.

Twelfth.

Morning. Ps. xxxvi.

Evening. Matt. xxvii. 1-26.

To us belong shame and confusion of face, that sinful man should have so given himself to hardness of heart as to have clamored for the blood of Him who came to give His life a ransom for theirs. Yet let me remember that, but for the hallowed influences of grace divine, I had been such as they. Evil is ever the same. It is therefore, O Lord, of Thine unbounded mercies that I am what I am. It is of Thy kindness that my lot has been cast in this goodly heritage. Like the sands of the sea, have Thy favors been numberless. Thou hast given me all things richly to enjoy.

When I look upon the happy home, the kind and loving friends, and all the creature comforts which Thou hast given me, when I remember how many of Thy children are still wandering in ignorance and darkness, have never heard of Jesus, have never felt the sweet consolations of the Comforter, my soul is overwhelmed with these manifestations of Thy kindness and love to me, and I would fain give to Thee all that I possess, my heart and life. This evening, Associate, let us seek a new consecration to the Giver of all good.

Thirteenth.

Morning. Ps. xxxvii. 1-22. Evening. Matt. xxvii. 26-44.

O SUFFERING Son of God, was it for me that Thou wast crowned with thorns, reviled, smitten, crucified? Was it that, in the day of vengeance, I might be spared? Didst Thou suffer thus that I might enter heaven? O spotless Lamb! O blessed Savior of my soul, let me come to Thee, and, with tears of gratitude and thankfulness, acknowledge Thine infinite, unspeakable kindness to me, and to a lost and fallen world.

"What, O blessed Savior, are my troubles to Thine! What are my bitterest tears and most aching heart in comparison with what Thou didst so freely endure for me! May the remembrance of this Thy fellowship in my suffering, and my fellowship in Thine, reconcile me patiently to endure whatsoever Thou seest meet to lay upon me! Give me grace ever to see that my bitterest trial is my sin; that my heaviest cross is the cross of my wandering, treacherous heart. When I think of that blessed time when God shall terminate the tears of a weeping world, may this be my loftiest ground of rejoicing—that there will be then no more sin to cause them."

Fourteenth.

Morning. Ps. xxxvii. 23.

Evening. Matt. xxvii. 46.

"BLESSED SAVIOR, let me drink in the whole spirit which ought to flow from this narrative into the souls of believers; and as we contemplate Thee, led like a lamb unto the slaughter, stricken for our iniquities, and pouring out Thy soul unto death for us, O may our hearts respond in faith and gratitude to this great manifestation; and, with the feeling that we are not our own, but bought with a price, even the costly price of Thine own precious and peace-speaking blood, may we give ourselves up to Thee!"

"Was it for crimes that I have done,
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!

"Well might the sun in darkness hide,
And shut his glories in,
When Christ, the mighty Maker, died,
For man, the creature's sin.

"Thus might I hide my blushing face
While His dear cross appears;
Dissolve my heart in thankfulness,
And melt mine eyes to tears.

"But drops of grief can ne'er repay
The debt of love I owe:
Here, Lord, I give myself away,—
'Tis all that I can do."

Fifteenth.

Morning. Ps. xxxviii. 1-12. Evening. Matt. xxviii.

WHEN the King of Terrors has snatched from our hearts a loved one, and borne it, while yet our lips were warm with its kisses, away to his dark and silent abode, stricken and bleeding we follow to the gate of the dead, and, as it fades from our eyes forever, stand in silence and anguish to list if, perchance, some whisper returning may not tell us the loved are not lost and lifeless forever. In the stillness and beauty of evening, in the repose and silence of midnight, in the deep solitude of our sorrowing hearts, we await some message of love, wafted to us from the spirit-land. But, alas! no breath ever returns from the tomb, to assure and comfort the heart in its anguish.

Thou alone, O Redeemer of man, when from the cross Thou didst enter this dark abode, conquer the Angel of Death, and return again to the land of the living, Thou alone hast assured us that the loved still live and are happy in the land of the blessed.

And now, as at the portal we listen, while Faith catches the spirit-words, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord," the heart, touched to a wildness of joy and tears, hears again the happy voice of the loved one, whispering, "Come."

Sixteenth.

Morning. Ps. xxxviii. 13.

Evening. Mark i. 1-22.

BELOVED Associate, how has thy soul prospered while, in our readings, we have thus been tracing the footsteps of our Lord and Master? Hast thou opened thy heart to the full measure of His divine influence? Hast thou made Him a welcome guest? By looking unto Him, hast thou become more and more transformed into His glorious image? Has thy heart been strengthened to say from a deeper assurance, "My Lord and my God," and is Jesus daily more precious to thee? Canst thou now look up to those mansions which He has gone to prepare for us, and, as His friend, claim a place in the house of His and thy Father?

O my Associate and fellow-pilgrim, does thy soul long for its rest and home in heaven? and art thou daily living there? Then will I bless God on thy behalf, and bind thee still more closely to my heart, in the trust that, though we may see each other's face no more on earth, we shall soon meet in a purer and happier world. This evening, let us pray especially for each other, that we may be kept spotless to the end. God be very gracious to thee, my Friend!

Seventeenth.

Morning. Ps. xxxix. Evening. Mark i. 33.

THE SAVIOR'S example proves that no strength of character or of grace can render devotional solitude unnecessary. He who had the Spirit without measure,—who knew no sin, who was full of grace, and in whom Satan could find nothing to work upon,—He went apart to pray. He held neither the fullness of His Godhead nor the perfection of His humanity as a reason for restraining prayer. And surely nothing that we have "attained" can render us independent of secret devotion!

The privacy of the domestic altar is not sufficiently "apart" when the heart is full and overflowing with adoring and melting views of sovereign and free grace. The full-souled exclamation, "Why me, Lord!" with its tones and tears, is fit only for the ear of God. And when the witness of the Spirit is strong, and the seal of the Spirit bright; when the soul is borne away amongst "the deep things of God," and the dazzling scenes of eternity, we must be alone, or lose one-half of the enjoyment.

"It is good for me to draw nigh unto God," alone.

PHILLIPS.

Eighteenth.

Morning. Ps. xl. Evening. Mark ii.

ANOTHER day, with its labors, is past. Ere I close my eyes to slumber and helplessness, I would seek Thee, my Heavenly Father, to implore mercy and forbearance. I feel that I am an unprofitable servant. Deeply conscious of my constant failures in duty and rectitude, even when I strive to live to Thee, fain would I cast myself upon that divine compassion which is ever saying, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

O Thou, whose heart is tenderness and pity, my burdened soul would rest its cares and conflicts upon Thee. O let me look away from earth to heaven, from my own sinful heart to Him who is perfect. Blessed Jesus, come Thou within, and cleanse me from my secret faults. Purify my inner, my hidden thoughts. Make me as Thou art, O Immaculate One!—glorious in holiness.

Now let Thy great grace rest upon me, and my Associates; and as we close our eyes may we sweetly sink to sleep, resting in the arms of Jesus; and if Thou dost give us another day of life, may it be to gather jewels for eternity!

Nineteenth.

Morning. Pa. xli. Evening. Mark iii.

THE heart cannot be divided in its service. Christ must reign supreme, or not at all. To wish to do righteously, but, when the trial comes, to falter, to yield, and do the wrong, is to submit all to the governance of evil. Not only must my heart be Christ's in its inclinations and desires, but in its purposes, resolves, and determinations, and my life in its outward developments.

How has it been with me to-day? and with thee, esteemed Associate? Have we listened to the voice of conscience, and followed its monitions, even though expressed in feebleness? Have we not to-day done those acts, cherished those thoughts, and spoken those words which we had resolved never to do again? Have we not left unaccomplished that which we resolved to do without delay? Can we lay our hands upon our hearts, and say that all is Christ's—that all this day's deeds have been His? Then may we again go to our repose, thankful that, as we pitch our tent one day nearer to the grave, so we are one day nearer heaven,—thankful that, amid the turmoil and trials of this world, we can lay up treasure in the world to come.

Twentieth.

Morning. Ps. xlii.

Evening. Mark iv. 1-20.

How quickly, to the inattentive soul, do the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things, steal into the heart, choke the word, and quench the Spirit! It is only by constant watchfulness and prayer, by daily giving myself to my Savior in a new and living covenant, that I may abide in Him, and keep the garden of my heart. How quickly will a principle of evil germinate, and flourish with how small a root!

"O Lord, in Thine own good, though unseen and mysterious way, do Thou carry on the good work of spiritual vegetation in my soul; that, like unto a well-watered garden, it may abound in all fair and pleasant fruits of righteousness. And may this, the produce of Thine own spiritual husbandry, overspread the whole of my character and history; so that there shall be no place for the thorns which choke, and stifle, and overbear the sanctifying influences of God's truth upon my soul!"

And now, Heavenly Father, unto Thee I commit myself and the loved for another night. In Thy mercy remember us, and, in Thy tenderness and our helplessness, watch and defend us.

Twenty-first.

Morning. Ps. xliii.

Evening. Mark iv. 21.

From the recesses of a lowly spirit,
My humble prayer ascends—O Father, hear it!
Borne on the trembling wings of fear and meekness,
Forgive its weakness.

I know, I feel how mean, and how unworthy,
The lowly sacrifice I pour before Thee;
What can I offer, O Thou most holy,
But sin and folly?

We see thy hand—it leads us—it supports us;
We hear thy voice—it counsels—it courts us;
And then we turn away; and still thy kindness
Forgives our blindness!

Who can resist thy gentle call, appealing
To every generous thought and grateful feeling!
Ah, who can hear the accents of thy mercy,
And never love Thee!

Kind Benefactor! plant within this bosom
The seeds of holiness; and let them blossom
In fragrance, and in beauty bright and vernal,
And spring eternal.

Then place them in those everlasting gardens
Where angels walk, and seraphs are the wardens;
Where every flower, brought safe through death's dark portal,
Becomes immortal.

BOWERING.

Twenty-Second.

Morning. Ps. xliv. 1-8. Evening. Mark v. 1-20.

It is only when we behold the more complete exhibitions of Satanic power, that we can have any true appreciation of how great things God has done for us, in redeeming us from evil and clothing us with our right mind. Then do we indeed begin to comprehend the terrible power of sin to transform the soul into a spirit of darkness.

How stealthy are its first approaches to the chaste and sensitive heart! With what syren songs does it lure us toward the snare, blinding our eyes with the glare of gilded pleasure, till we lose our perception of error, and our sensibility to wrong.

O Thou, who didst manifest Thyself to break from captive souls the shackles of sin, show forth Thy power and great goodness in setting me free from this bondage of evil. May I be disenthralled from all these sinful lusts! May my passions and desires know none but sanctified promptings! Help me, O Lord, to discern what is evil within me; and bestow upon me such a measure of Thy transforming grace that I may be wholly renewed in heart and life, and daily walk by the light of Thy spirit.

Twenty-Third.

Morning. Ps. xliv. 9. Evening. Mark v. 21.

GRANT unto me at this hour, O compassionate Savior, that faith by which I may draw near and touch the hem of Thy garment, that the vileness of my nature may be cleansed, and the malady of sin be healed. Bestow upon me that childlike simplicity, that gentleness of spirit, that purity of thought, that penitence for error, and that warmth of devotion, which shall ever make my heart Thy fitting abode.

"Heavenly Father, it is the unholiness of my heart which mars the joys of communion with Thee. It is my especial prayer that Thou mayest impart largely to me of the sanctifying influences of Thy grace and spirit. Let sin be crucified more and more. Let self be subjugated more and more.

"Under the transforming power of new affections, may God become all in all! May it be mine to know, in growing experience, the happiness of true holiness! May I jealously avoid all that is likely to estrange me from Thee, and zealously cultivate all that is calculated to draw me nearer toward Thee! May I know that a simple faith in Jesus is the great secret of victory over the world!"

Twenty-Fourth.

Morning. Ps. xlv.

Evening. Mark vi. 1-13.

I AM altogether too prone to distrust myself under the Omnipotent Power of grace. I am ever feeling that, since I can of myself do nothing, it is idle for me to attempt anything, even in my Master's name. There is ever with me a feeling that, were I some one else, in a different position, surrounded by different circumstances, blessed with different capabilities, were I one of those whom the Lord sent forth two by two, then could I toil and labor in His name with a strong hand and a willing heart, in good report or in evil report, amid friends or enemies. But when I look within, and behold my own utter weakness, yea, my sinfulness, my reluctance to do His will, even when it is plainly manifest, my heart trembles, lest, after all, I should fail of the grace of God. My only hope and trust is in promised strength divine.

O Lord, Thou knowest me, and my weaknesses. Wilt Thou lay underneath me Thine arm of strength, and lift me up to a stronger life, to a greater willingness and zeal to labor for Thee as Thou wilt? May I rest not in my own strength, but Thine! O God, be merciful.

Twenty-Fifth.

Morning. Ps. xlvi.

Evening. Mark vi. 14–29.

Blessed God, in the midst of ten thousand snares and dangers, which surround me from without and from within, permit me to look up unto Thee with my humble entreaty, that Thou wouldst deliver me from them that rise up against me, and that Thine eyes may be upon me for good. When sinners entice me, may I not consent! May holy converse with God give me a disrelish for the converse of those who are strangers to Thee! May I honor them that fear the Lord; and, walking with such wise and holy men, may I find I am daily advancing in wisdom and holiness!

Quicken me, O Lord, by their means, that by me Thou mayest also quicken others. Make me the happy instrument of enkindling and animating the flame of divine love in their hearts; and may it catch from heart to heart, and grow every moment in its progress; and may I be endeavoring to form myself, under the influences of divine grace, for the entertainment of those angelic spirits that live in Thy presence.

Dr. Doddridge.

Twenty-Sixth.

Morning. Pa. xlvii. Evening. Mark vi. 30.

"JESUS was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd."

Soul, how didst thou wander up and down in this wilderness world, seeking rest and happiness, ever saying, Who will show me any good, yet ever vexed with disappointments, worn with toil, and wasted with care, till the gentle Shepherd took thee in His arms and brought thee to His fold!

"The Lord my Shepherd is,
I shall be well supplied;
Since He is mine, and I am His,
What can I want beside?

"He leads me to the place
Where heavenly pasture grows;
Where living waters gently pass,
And full salvation flows.

"Amid surrounding foes
Thou dost my table spread;
My cup with blessings overflows,
And joy exalts my head.

"While He affords His aid,
I cannot yield to fear;
Though I should walk through death's dark shade,
My Shepherd's with me there."

Twenty-Seventh.

Morning. Ps. xlviii. Evening. Mark vii. 1-23.

IMMACULATE EFFULGENCE, let Thy brightness irradiate my heart—that heart which I would have the temple of the Sinless. Is it of purity meet for the presence of Him who cannot look on iniquity? Burns there an unholy desire upon that altar whence should ever ascend a flame of the purest devotion? Dwells there within an emotion of pride, where I have welcomed Him who is meek and lowly of spirit? Lingers there still a thought of unkindness in the abode of Him whose hands were ever extended in blessing, and whose lips were opened to drop for the sorrowing the tenderest words of pity, compassion, and love?

O sinful, sinful heart! Can it, O Spotless One, be made so pure, so good and holy, that Thou wilt make it Thine? Come, then, O Lamb of God, who didst die to take away the sin of the world, come and possess it, and make it Thine; wash it anew in Thy sanctifying blood, and make it Thine in holiness. Breathe upon it, and make it Thine in tenderness, love, and devotion. Seal it with the impress of the Image of Heaven, and make it Thine own forever.

Twenty-Eighth and Twenty-Ninth.

Morning. Ps. xlix.

Evening. Mark vii. 24.

THE winter has fled, and the harbinger of spring approaches. It is far back up the mountain, that, looking onward across the vale of the year, we started for its pilgrimage. Thus far has our Heavenly Father, amid all the perils of life, led us in kindness, in peace, and safety.

O my Esteemed and Beloved Pilgrim Associate, how many times have I thought of thee, and prayed for thee that thy strength and heart fail not! Few more such wintry summits have we to climb ere we reach our journey's end. How many that began the year with us, are now at rest!—at rest on earth, and, we may hope, at rest in heaven. The little work they had to do is done, or left undone forever. We are spared for a little season longer. What if it be but a few days ere we, too, must say farewell! Are we ready to leave life's labor where it is, and appear before that tribunal where we are to be judged according to the deeds done in the body? O let us strive with all our powers, that the little remnant of our lives yet meted out to us in mercy, be gathered up for heaven.

Rules for Moral Conduct.

BEFORE you resolve upon an action, or a course of action—

1. Cultivate the habit of deciding upon its moral character. Let the first question always be, Is this action right? And let this question be asked *first*, *before* imagination has set before us the seductions of pleasure, or any step has been taken which should pledge our consistency of character. If we ask this question *first*, it can generally be decided with ease.

2. Remember that your conscience has become imperfect, from your frequent abuse of it. Hence, in many cases, its discrimination will be indistinct. Instead of deciding, it will frequently only doubt. That doubt should be, generally, as imperative as a decision.

3. Cultivate, on all occasions, in private or in public, in small or great, in action or in thought, the habit of obeying the monitions of conscience, all other things to the contrary notwithstanding. There can nothing happen to you so bad as to have done wrong; there can nothing be gained so valuable as to have done right.

PRES. WAYLAND.

MARCH.

First.

Morning. Ps. 1. 1–11. Evening. Matt. viii. 1–21.

So bountiful and constant are the common blessings of daily life, that we often fail to receive them with gratitude, or even the recollection that they are the gift of a beneficent Father. How seldom do we bethink ourselves, that the glory and beauty of this outer world, of the sky, and the starry heavens, the broad and mysterious ocean, the earth and its enchanting prospects, and all the myriad sources of pleasure and happiness, are but the unfoldings of an Infinite Mind, teeming with boundless love for His children! How seldom do we reflect that He made them for us to enjoy, because it was His pleasure to make us happy! We seem never to think that earth might have been left without her thousand varied

landscape beauties—the flowers untouched with their myriad dainty tints—and the soft blue sky disrobed of its golden glory and magnificence.

How reluctant are we, when Spring comes again, with her softened step and breath, premonishing of that flood of life and beauty which she will soon scatter over the bleak and wintry earth, while we give our hearts to her witchery and loveliness, and bless her for all her multifarious sources of the purest and richest delight,—how reluctant are we to acknowledge that she is the child of our Heavenly Father, and but the dispenser of His ever lavish bounties! We love the gifts, but not the Giver; and because they come so bounteously, we render not the homage even of thanksgiving. All these are Thine, kind Heavenly Father, created for Thy pleasure and our enjoyment. May I see them such, and love them as the gifts of Him whose hand is always filled with blessings!

And when the earth shall robe herself again in smiles and loveliness, may she, with her thousand voices, whisper to my heart, These are the gifts of God. And as my spirit rises heavenward, to pay the homage of its awakened love, may it catch those fainter, sweeter echoes, ever saying, There are richer gifts above!

Second.

Morning. Ps. l. 12.

Evening. Mark viii. 22.

HAVE I not too much of the spirit of Peter? When some favorite plan or scheme is thwarted, when I am disappointed in some anticipated enjoyment, or when adverse winds burst in upon my pleasures, does not my heart hastily rebel against the ways of Providence, and yield to passion and ill-nature? Do I not often feel that the events and currents of life are all wrong, and that if I could only bring things to move according to my wish, how much happier I should be?

Alas! shall I ever gain that strength by which I shall be enabled to say and feel, in every such trial, "Get thee behind me, Satan; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men." O give me ever to feel, Heavenly Father, that Thy ways are all the best. So cause my heart to repose on Thee that I shall never desire aught aside from the indications of Thy will. If Thou dost give me prosperity, health, and friends, may I receive them as the tokens of Thy favor! If these are taken away, or denied me, let me not feel an unsubmissive emotion, even in my loneliness, knowing Thou dost always do what is for my highest good.

Third.

Morning. Ps. li.

Evening. Mark ix. 1-29.

FAITH is friendly confidence. We may not be able to comprehend the manner in which it accomplishes its work, yet, since we know that God is infinite, not more in power than in affection for His children, we are assured, that, if we are His, He can grant, and will grant, every favor we may ask, if it accord with His wisdom. Hence the earnest prayer of faith availeth much. It arms flesh with omnipotence. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" If we may hide ourselves in Him, what evil shall we fear? If He hold us in His protecting hand, of whom shall we be afraid, or what shall cause our feet to stumble?

"O my God, I rejoice to know that my interests for time and eternity are confided to Thy keeping. Though often wonderful in counsel, Thou art ever excellent in working. Thou art, God, only wise, righteous in all Thy ways, and holy in all Thy works. I commit my way and my doings unto Thee. Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe. May I trust Thy wisdom and faithfulness, even amid crosses and losses, and frowning providences! Make these all work together for my good."

Fourth.

Morning. Pa. lii.

Evening. Mark ix. 30.

WHO shall be the greatest? Pride and envy, most hateful tenants of the human heart! Let me look within. Have I not been envious of the prosperity, advancement, or reputation of others? When commendation falls from every lip, is there no rising of dissatisfaction, no wish, no inclination to whisper the suspicion that, though all may be so fair without, there is hollowness within? Is there not, too often, lurking in the heart, the feeling that our efforts and kind wishes have not been appreciated; that we have been overlooked; that others have received the respect or honor to which we were justly entitled? And do we not sometimes even give way to a spirit of retaliation—to the feeling, that, if others receive the honor, they may sustain all the burden?

O my soul, dost thou seek the honor that comes from men, or art thou only filled with a sense of that honor which comes from God? It is little for thee to be judged of man's judgment. Yea, toil on in silence, in patience, in earnestness, wheresoever the Master shall appoint. Thy reward and honor is not now. It is better to receive thy evil things in this life than in the world to come.

Fifth.

Morning. Ps. liii., liv.

Evening. Mark x. 1-27.

O MOST MERCIFUL GOD, whose goodness is great, and the multitude of whose mercies innumerable, have mercy upon us; for our sins are ever before us, presented by the continual accusations of a troubled conscience. We have sinned against thee, and done evil in thy sight; and yet, because thou art the God of Mercy, and Fountain of eternal purity, delighting in the conversion and salvation of a sinner, we present unto thee the sacrifice of a troubled spirit, of broken and contrite hearts; beseeching thee to let the dew of thy favor and the fire of thy love wash away our sins and purify our souls. Make us clean hearts, O God, and pure hands; though our sins be as scarlet, yet make them like wool; though they be as purple, yet make them white as snow.

Restore the voice of joy and gladness to us; let us not be forever separate from the sweet refreshings of thy favor and presence; but let thy free Spirit loose us as from the bondage of sin, and establish us in the freedom and liberty of the sons of God: so shall we sing of thy righteousness, and our lips give thee praise in the congregation of thy redeemed ones. BISHOP TAYLOR.

Sixth.

Morning. Ps. lv. 1-15. Evening. Mark x. 28.

THOU compassionate Redeemer, who camest not to be ministered unto, but to minister, to give Thy life a ransom for many, to teach us how to live acceptably, shall I be unwilling to follow in the path Thy feet have trod? Shall I seek personal ease and comfort, while He sought the good of others? Shall my feet luxuriously rest on tapestry, when His were worn and dusty with the weary toil of messages of goodness? Shall I repose in idleness, and give my heart to the content of worldly abundance, when He, in the midst of His unceasing labors to instruct and lead us, had not where to lay His head?

May it be enough for us, Associates, to be as our Master! May it be no cross for us, for the love of Christ, to leave houses, lands, parents, and loved ones! May nothing ever come between our hearts and our Savior! May we ever not only look to the recompense of reward, but may our souls rest, fully rest, in hope, in peace, and contentment, in the assurance that a kind Father governs all in supreme excellence and rectitude! Give us to feel that wheresoever Thou dost bid us go, and only there, are we safe.

Seventh.

Morning. Ps. lv. 16.

Evening. Mark xi. 1-11.

"O BE joyful in the Lord, all ye lands: serve the Lord with gladness, and come before His presence with a song."

"Be ye sure that the Lord he is God; it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture."

"Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee, for thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God, the Father Almighty.

"O Lord, the only begotten Son, Jesus Christ! O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.

"For thou only art holy! thou only art the Lord! thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father."

COMMON PRAYER.

Eighth.

Morning. Ps. lvi.

Evening. Mark xi. 12.

WHILE our lips daily utter the prayer, "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us," is there truly within us that spirit of forgiveness which the utterance of these words presupposes? When I thus pray, do I truly mean that I would be forgiven at Thy hands, great Judge of all the inner thoughts of the heart, as I forgive those who wrong me—as I forgive my enemies? When my errors have been needlessly, perhaps maliciously, exposed, my motives misconstrued, my actions misrepresented, my character tarnished and maligned, can I then lay my hand upon my heart and say, Forgive me, O Lord, as I forgive them that sin against me?

Infuse within my whole being, O God of goodness, a larger measure of this divine spirit of forgiveness; that spirit which alone whispers to the sad, sin-sick, and weary soul, of a Savior reconciled, of peace with an offended Father, of His gracious smile of approbation, and of admission at last into the kingdom of His glory. Angel of forgiveness, make my heart Thy home on earth, that Thy home may be mine in heaven.

Ninth.

Morning. Ps. lvii.

Evening. Mark xii. 1-27.

WHEN often, at the close of day, my thoughts wander back to hours long past, and recall the loved, when I follow them again to their final rest, and recollect that I, too, must soon make my narrow couch beside them in the land of silence and unconsciousness, my soul is exceeding sad. There is a terror in the grave, which ever steals within our saddened hearts, from which no knowledge of a coming resurrection can release us. As a resting-place, the grave is terrible. The poet has sung, "*There sweet be my rest;*" but can it be sweet to lose this warm, gushing consciousness of being, these generous and blessed affections, these lofty thoughts divine — the heaven-plumed messengers of the soul? If there we are to sleep till the morn of the resurrection, then, indeed, hath death a sting, and the grave a victory, with a triple terror.

O blessed, blessed Savior, I thank Thee that Thou hast taught, and I have learned, a better way. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are not dead. Guardian angels, in their loving bosoms, bear the new-born soul away to a better clime, while yet our sorrowing hearts are lingering round the fading clay.

Tenth.

Morning. Ps. lviii.

Evening. Mark xii. 28.

"THE first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind and with all thy strength; this is the first great commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."

O Thou that hast made the heart, and given it its monitions, wilt Thou, at this hour, so bestow upon me of Thy Spirit, that these two Great Commandments may enter as the great leading principles of all its motives? I would have Thy will my will, Thy thoughts my thoughts. I would have no distinct being from Thine. My soul would lose itself in its God. Now would I aspire to this inner, heartfelt communion, to the assurance that I am Thine. Help me, Heavenly Father, so to renounce myself, so to bring all to the altar of sacrifice, and so to give myself to Thee in a new and living covenant, that I may love Thee with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength. Associates, can we not learn this entire submission to our Maker?

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How reluctant are we, when Spring comes again, with her softened step and breath, premonishing of that flood of life and beauty which she will soon scatter over the bleak and wintry earth, while we give our hearts to her witchery and loveliness, and bless her for all her multifarious sources of the purest and richest delight,—how reluctant are we to acknowledge that she is the child of our Heavenly Father, and but the dispenser of His ever lavish bounties! We love the gifts, but not the Giver; and because they come so bounteously, we render not the homage even of thanksgiving. All these are Thine, kind Heavenly Father, created for Thy pleasure and our enjoyment. May I see them such, and love them as the gifts of Him whose hand is always filled with blessings!

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Thirteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxi.

Evening. Mark xiv. 27–50.

GENTLY now is velvet-sandaled evening spreading over us her dusky, star-bespangled mantle, wooing the spirit's swift-winged messengers to lofty flights amid the pure, the beautiful, the holy. So sank the earth to rest, in silence and in beauty, when Jesus, with His chosen ones, came to Cedron and the Garden.

O sweet, quiet, yet dark and sad Gethsemane! Sweetest yet saddest spot of earth, where the meek and lowly Jesus, the Savior of the world, fell upon the dewy bosom of the ground, crushed beneath His load of sin and agony. What painful thoughts linger in thy peaceful moonlight shadows, O Gethsemane!—that here the Sinless One should have wept for *me*, have borne the stroke of vengeful retribution, and have taken to His lips the cup of death to give *me* life.

Yet in what a glory doth this humiliation robe itself, that here, in these agonizing, struggling pangs, the Son of God on His own soul bore away, once and forever, the transgressions of a guilty and apostate world, lifting it again upward to the very gate of heaven.

Fourteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxii.

Evening. Mark xiv. 51.

WHEN the crowd, ready to crown Jesus king, is shouting Hosanna, it is not difficult to chime our voices to the universal acclamation; but when the tide of popular applause is turned, when every one is lavish of contumely and insult, how many a disciple has left his Master and fled! How many a poor, faint-hearted Peter, has ventured only to follow Him afar off, lest he should be identified as a servant of the despised Nazarene!

Soul, is it thus with *thee?* Associate, is it thus with thee? Do we at all times stand as steadfast witnesses for our Lord? Are we ready, on all becoming occasions, to witness how great things Jesus hath done for us? Do we never shrink, and hesitate, and falter in our discipleship?

O Lord, Thou who dost ever by Thy Spirit testify in our hearts of good and evil, of immortality and the judgment, fill us now with that steadfastness and zeal which shall make us always Thy faithful witnesses, shedding forth the light of a pure and
less Christian character. Shine Thou
within our hearts, lest the light that i
darkness.

Fifteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxiii.

Evening. Mark xv. 1–26.

WHAT meekness, what patience, what forbearance, what long-suffering and compassion! Jesus leaves the glory He had with the Father before the world was, submits to insult, mockery, shame, and death, not from necessity, not for His own good, but that He might bless a world lying in wickedness—that He might redeem me and you, and present us spotless in the kingdom of His Father's glory.

"O that my heart were more softened by such a contemplation, and that I knew what it was to look unto Him whom my sins have pierced, and to mourn because of them! And let me furthermore glory in the cross of Christ; and, taking up my own cross, let me be a follower in all things of Him who was meek and lowly. O that the sacrifice made for sin affected me rightly with a sense of the evil of it! and O keep me from that sinning willfully, after which there remaineth no more sacrifice. Mayest Thou henceforth open my heart to the constraining influence of the love of Christ, leading me to love Him back again! It is my earnest prayer, O God, that I may be conformed to His death, and be enabled to suffer all for His sake."

Sixteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxiv.

Evening. Mark xv. 26.

O THOU who didst suffer death, even the death of the cross, that Thou mightest become the great atoning Sacrifice, that didst shed Thine own most precious blood that Thou mightest bring a ruined world back to heaven, at this hour, penitently I come to the foot of the Cross, imploring that now Thou wouldst grant me the washing of regeneration. O wash me, Lord; not my feet alone—my hands, my head, my heart. Let now the work of grace be perfected within me, that henceforth I may feel I am wholly Thine, and that I may know no other will but Thine.

I would ever rest on Thee, as lies a bubble on the bosom of the sea, that when I pass away from earth, like the bursting of the bubble, I may lose myself in Thee, my Nativity. O Glorious Redeemer, since it was not mine to behold Thee clad in earthly vestments, wilt Thou so give me of Thy Spirit that I may know Thee, may love and adore Thee with my whole being? Come, Presence of the Divine, and overshadow me, and my Associate, and all near to us, that living, we may walk by Thy Spirit, and dying, find repose in Thy bosom.

Seventeenth.

Morning. Ps. lxv.

Evening. Mark xvi.

"As they mourned and wept."

Tears are not always of sorrow or of weakness. The richest, fondest joys, the tenderest and most precious affections, the loftiest and noblest consecrations of the soul, germinate only in a heart softened with these dewy crystal-drops.

Hidden in the deepest recess of the spirit, it is only when touched to intensest feeling and emotion, that these children of the soul, angelic in their purity, come gushing forth in their eloquence and beauty, lifting Sorrow from her mourning-weeds, wreathing Mercy with a smile, and whispering to the ear of Justice of forgiveness.

The soul, gazing toward the shining hills of Paradise, and ravished with its golden glories, as it struggles with its fears and hopes, tearfully looking and longing for its home in that land of blessedness, at last, like the morning lark, shakes the heavy drops from off the lids, and plumes its wings for its adventurous and life-long flight for heaven. O soul, upward, ever upward! stay not, stop not, till thy weary wings be folded, and thy fainting heart find rest in the bosom of thy Savior.

Eighteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxvi. Evening. Luke i. 1–25.

ESTEEMED Companion, whilst we have thus been seeking to walk together in the name of our Master, can it be said of us as it was of Zachariah and Elizabeth, That they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless? Are we, with all diligence and earnestness, daily seeking such a life? Or have we, in our journey, become enamored of wayside toys, slackening our pace, and wearying of our toil?

O beloved fellow Spirit, let us counsel one another. We know how easy it is to lose the grace within us; how soon the unnurtured flame of love expires; how stealthily and how fatally sin glides into our hearts, and flatters us to ease and carelessness. Have we listened to its beguiling words, and turned away from holiness? Or, in the steadfastness of our integrity, have we ever said, Get thee behind me, Satan; Thou only, O Lord, art my God, Thee only will I serve?

This evening, as we draw near to the throne of Divine Grace, let us, *Associates*, *all fervently pray for each other*, that God would elevate us wholly above the world and its pleasures, to an indwelling with Himself.

Nineteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxvii.

Evening. Luke i. 26–56.

MYSTERY of mysteries! That He who was above all glory, should leave the throne of His power and majesty, clothe Himself with humanity as a little child, that He might atone for our transgressions, and free us from the bondage of our sins. Man brought sin and death into the world, but, unable to cope with them, they bound him in chains of darkness and crime. Then it was that God Himself left His glory and entered the veil of humanity, and became the man Christ Jesus, that He might, for us, overcome our enemies and set us free.

"Almighty God, who hast so loved the world, that for our redemption from sin and misery, thou gavest thy Son, that he might perform to thee the obedience which mankind owed, and teach us what thou wouldst have us to do; overshadow us with thy Holy Spirit of grace, that as Christ was pleased to take upon him our nature, so we may be born again, and be partakers of the divine nature, that conforming to his image, following his example, and being filled with his spirit, we may grow in the love of God, live in righteousness, and be made partakers of the inheritance of thy well beloved Son."

Twentieth.

Morning. Ps. lxviii. 1-18. Evening. Luke i. 57.

In contemplation of the infinite wisdom and compassion manifest in the salvation of fallen man, let me bow my heart and soul in adoration, praise, and gratitude. It is all of free, unmerited grace. It is because God is boundless in goodness and mercy. May this Thy love ever bind me closer to all that is Thine! O what and where had we been, but for that Heart which could pity, and that Love which could save a dying world!

"Let me see the love of the Father in sending His Son into the world to be the propitiation for my sins. Give me the knowledge of that redemption which is through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of sins; and in this redemption may I recognize the tender mercy of God. Enlighten my darkness, O God; guide my feet in the way of peace; and may I wax strong in the might of Thy Spirit! Do Thou, the very God of peace, sanctify me wholly; save me from the propensities of an evil and accursed nature; make me like unto Christ; and fulfill the declaration that because He liveth I shall live also—because He overcame I shall overcome, and be seated with Him on His throne."

Twenty-First.

Morning. Ps. lxviii. 19. Evening. Luke ii. 1-24.

SILENTLY the shades of evening are gathering round us—the day is hasting to its close, its labor past, and darkness woos the heavy eyes to quiet sleep. Ah, what report have the fleeting hours borne up to heaven's recording angel? Has there been a word, or thought, or act recorded with a blush or sigh? Is there no blot upon the page which I would gladly wipe away?

O Lord, most merciful Redeemer, deeply do I feel my own worthlessness, my sinfulness! Would I might live more to Thine honor! Would I were a more becoming example of Christian virtue! Would that I could daily feel my life is wholly as Thou wouldst have it!

Come near to me and to all Associates, this evening, O Holy Father, and renew our hearts in righteousness. Bestow upon us that lively faith which lays hold on Thy forgiving grace and Thine arm of protection, so that we may all, henceforth walk blamelessly and worthily before Thee. Though unworthy, be Thou near to all our hearts, O blessed Jesus, and, as we sink to sleep, may it be with Thy loving name upon our lips.

Twenty-Second.

Morning. Ps. lxix. 1-18.

Evening. Luke ii. 25.

HEAVENLY FATHER, as Jesus waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and as the grace of God was upon Him, so be pleased to make me and my Associate to increase in strength and knowledge, and so let Thy grace rest upon us, nourishing up unto perfection every Christian virtue, and uprooting every sinful principle within our hearts. Daily may we draw nearer unto Thee in purity and holiness.

"O for more of Enoch's spirit, that we may walk with God continually; for more of the meekness and ardor of our Savior! In a word, let us live for God, for heaven, for eternity. Then shall we rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and in everything give thanks.

"The world will sink into nothing before us—souls be valued according to their worth—the divine glory be our chief aim, and heaven our final home.

"May you and I seek to be uncommon Christians; that is, eminently holy. It is this which conforms us to His image, which fits us for communion with Him here, and which only will fit us for heaven and for glory."

J. B. TAYLOR.

Twenty-Third.

Morning. Ps. lxix. 19.

Evening. Luke iii.

If John the Baptist, than whom, Christ affirmed none born of woman to be greater, felt, in his humility, unworthy to loose the shoe-latchet of the Coming One, how should I ever feel that my most appropriate place is low before Him who was without blemish, and whom I have offended! May my heart ever be filled with a becoming sense of my unworthiness! O how wayward and unfaithful have I been, even since I professed to be Thy disciple!

Give me, with the Publican, to feel that I am not worthy so much as to lift my eyes unto heaven, and to smite upon my breast, and say, God be merciful to me, a sinner. Yet, O God of goodness, accompany it with such an appreciation of Thy compassion as will enable me to look up and say, "My Lord and my God."

"Almighty and everlasting God, who hatest nothing that thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all those who are penitent, create and make in us new and contrite hearts, that we, lamenting our sins, and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of thee the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Twenty-Fourth.

Morning. Pa. lxx. Evening. Luke iv. 1-20.

HAST thou, Christian pilgrim, this day been tempted? Has the evil one plied thee with his wiles, his gilded baits, his promises of good, of happiness, or of pleasure? Has pride lingered round thy heart, vanity sat upon thine eyelids, ease held thy folded hands, or unkindness scattered poison over thy lips? So was our Savior tempted, yet He yielded not—sin gained no entrance to His heart.

O that we could learn to resist like Him all approach of evil! Thy word, O God, was the Rock and Fortress to which He fled; so may it constantly be ours! In Thee, and in Thee only, are we safe. When prompted to hasty words, let us remember, that when He was reviled, He reviled not again. When the impulse to avenge our wrongs almost overcomes us, may we then remember that He taught us, both by His most precious words and example, that we resist not evil.

O Thou Perfect One, Thou Great Example to a fallen world, may Thine image so be impressed upon our hearts, Thy Spirit so make its abode within, that we may be transformed into Thy likeness, even from glory to glory!

Twenty-fifth.

Morning. Ps. lxxi. 1-13. Evening. Luke iv. 21.

CHRIST'S word is always attended with power to all hearts that love His teachings. In all ages has the Truth been a rock of defence, a strong tower of safety to all that have made it their trust. Such would I have it to my soul, and such may it ever be to thine, beloved Companion! May it come to us often amid our daily toil, our enjoyments, our sorrows, assuring us that, though heart and flesh fail us, Thy mercies, O God, are sure-abiding forever!

May Thy blessed Word, O Lord, be to us continually that anchor of the soul, wherein we may trust securely, and rest in safety in every stormy assault of sorrow or temptation! May its wisdom teach us, its warnings guide, its assurances bring us comfort, and its messages of love and sympathy give us strength to labor on in patient hope, for our Master's sake! When we read, let its words come to our souls and hearts as from the Father's lips to us, His children. May it be our only thought, What saith the Word? Guard us, O Light of all Light, from a careless, inattentive reading. Speak Thou to us, O Blessed God, whenever we turn our thoughts and hearts to Thy Testimonies.

Twenty-Sixth.

Morning. Ps. lxxi. 14.

Evening. Luke v. 1–17.

All-atoning Redeemer, low before Thee would my spirit prostrate itself, praying that it may feel applied that all-cleansing blood which can make me white as snow. With the leprous man, would I cry, "If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean."

O Thou immaculate and omnipotent Savior, wilt Thou now cleanse me?—take away all my foulness, that I may receive Thine own perfect purity. Cleanse my thoughts, my wishes, my desires, my inclinations. Purify my passions, that they know none but sanctified impulses.

I come to Thee, and cast myself on Thy boundless mercy and compassion, knowing that Thou canst, and Thou wilt bless me with all the fullness of Thy grace, if I will walk in Thy commandments. Wherefore, O Lord, aid me to examine my heart, that I may not, while I pray for purity, be cherishing within an unwillingness to walk in all that perfectness, without which, the soul can never rise to internal holiness. May I be as diligent in an upright life, as I am earnest in prayer for blessings! What avails it to pray, if my life is such as Thou canst not bless!

Twenty-Seventh.

Morning. Ps. lxxii. Evening. Luke v. 18.

WITH what a sweet, reviving influence, come these words to the struggling, burdened heart!—"I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;"—giving it to feel that Jesus came to save such as I. In our incessant warfare with the hydra-headed evils of our fallen natures, and with wickedness without, almost overborne and disheartened, it comes to our fainting souls like a healing balm, to our chafed and lacerated spirits as softened music to the restless ear of pain.

As the child, wearied in the heated chase of its flitting pleasures, is lulled to calm and quiet rest on the loving bosom of its mother, so, O Lord, my soul, turning from the vanities of life, from the bitter sense of its own unworthiness, and from the heart-felt burden of impurity, would repose on the forgiving bosom of its Savior. Here permit me, O my God, in the arms of Thine affectionate protection, to rest, in the blest assurance I am Thine.

Associate, accept my heartfelt benediction, my earnest prayer for thee. May angels guard thee in this world of sin, and keep thee till we meet above!

Twenty-Eighth.

Morning. Pa. lxxiii. 1–17.

Evening. Luke vi. 1–26.

"He went out into a mountain to pray."

Prayer is the application of want to Him who alone can relieve it, the confession of sin to Him who alone can pardon it. Prayer draws all the Christian graces into its focus. It draws Charity, followed by her lovely train, her forbearance with faults, her forgiveness of injuries, her pity for errors, her compassion for want. It draws Repentance, with her holy sorrows, her pious resolutions, her self-distrust. It attracts faith, with her elevated eye, Hope, with her grasped anchor, Beneficence, with her open hand, Zeal, looking far and wide to serve, Humility, with introverted eye, looking at home.

Prayer, by quickening these graces in the heart, warms them into life, fits them for service, and dismisses each to its appropriate practice. Cordial prayer is mental virtue; Christian virtue is spiritual action. The mould into which genuine prayer casts the soul is not effaced by the suspension of the act, but retains some touches of the impression till the act is repeated.

H. More.

Twenty-Ninth.

Morning. Ps. lxxiii. 18. Evening. Luke vi. 27.

"Of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh."

Doth it not then become us, Christian Associates, to note our words and actions, that we may truly know our hearts? Upon what have my thoughts been chiefly occupied this day, when not engaged with my proper labor? What has been the substance of my conversation? What are the pictures which I most frequently draw in imagination—the scenes I love most to dwell upon?

Are they of doing good, of kind deeds, of spreading my Redeemer's kingdom? Has my spirit wandered away from the present to linger at the Garden, or the Cross? Has it winged its way to the tearless realm of the better land? Has it looked away to Jesus, that it might become a truer copy of His excellence? Have I looked out upon this world of beauty and of glory, with thankfulness that I was made capable of enjoying it? Have I in all things sought to see the hand of Divine Goodness, or have all my thoughts been of self, pleasure, the world, wealth, and display? Associates, let us truly and faithfully endeavor to know ourselves.

Thirtieth.

Morning. Ps. lxxiv. 1-11.

Evening. Luke vii. 1-23.

I THANK Thee, Blessed Jesus, that Thou hast taught us the sanctity of human affection. Thou hast never a rebuke for tenderness of heart, how strong soever it be. *Thou* hast never taught that we *can love too well* those angel friends Thou hast given us. Thou hast asked that we should love the Father and the ever blessed Son *more*, but not these less. Thou hast permitted us to love them all we will, and only asked that we should love Thee more; yea, Thou hast Thyself wept the tear of human tenderness.

I thank Thee, blessed Jesus, that Thou hast enabled me to see that this cruel thought, that our Heavenly Father tears away from our hearts those we love most tenderly, because we have clasped them too fondly to our bosoms, *is not Thine*. Such an idolized one, Thou didst restore again to the torn and idolizing heart of the widow of Nain.

"The warmest love on earth is still
Imperfect when 'tis given;
But there's a purer clime above,
Where perfect hearts in perfect love
Unite! and this—is heaven."

Thirty-First.

Morning. Ps. lxxiv. 12. Evening. Luke ix. 24.

O Thou, who by the right hand of the Father art exalted to be a Prince and a Savior to give repentance and forgiveness of sins, now, in this accepted time, I come to thee, for these great blessings. My heart is hard and impenitent, and little affected by my many sins and thy great goodness; I beseech thee take away my stony heart, and give me a heart of flesh. Vouchsafe unto me that broken and contrite spirit which the Most High and Holy God will not despise.

May thy sufferings, gracious Redeemer, touch and melt my soul! Let the goodness of God lead me to repentance. Never leave me to myself and my own perverse, wayward, and wandering heart. O now bring me back, by thy Holy Spirit, to my heavenly Father; and, returning to him, may I obtain his mercy, and find that he does abundantly pardon, for Jesus Christ's sake! Help me to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, my Lord. Enable me so to believe that Christ may dwell in my heart, and I may supremely love thee, my God.

Bickersteth.

APRIL.

First.

Morning. Ps. lxxv.

Evening. Luke viii. 1-21.

ASSOCIATE, here with our feet resting on the first verdant moss of Spring, let us tarry a moment for reflection. Seest thou not the smile of coming beauty in the bursting buds of the Maple and the Willow? Hearest thou not the sweet and cheerful notes of the early Bluebird, and the ever-endless laughter of the gushing rills?

Draw wisdom from these guileless teachers. Open thy heart, and bid them discourse in their simple eloquence of the things their Master hath taught them, and thou shalt hear them singing ceaselessly, 'Serve thy God in love, and be ever happy. Rest all thy care in Him, and take no thought for the morrow, for He careth for thee, and will provide for

all thy wants. Be His affectionate and obedient child, and He will be thy indulgent and beneficent Father.'

But in these light and cheerful teachings, there is a sterner admonition, bidding us to hasten in our duties and labor, for that life is hurrying to its final close with the unheeded swiftness of the wind. Hearest thou not, amid the loving music of these Spring messengers, a tender chord ever chiming in a sombre monotone, "farewell!" Listen, it hath a whisper for thy heart. Nature hath many a voice for him whose spirit listens.

'Farewell! It is meet we should bid thee adieu, even in our greeting, for, ere we return again, thou mayest be quietly sleeping that sleep that awakes not to give us a welcome. Our songs may be for other ears, our beauties for other eyes. Yet fear not, for if in faithfulness thou dost serve thy Maker, it shall be thine to live in a brighter clime, where the Bluebird and Fountain have a lovelier song, the Maple and Willow a richer verdure, and the Spring a never-ending smile of love for the pure and sanctified. There in its sunlight of glory, in thy robes of immaculate splendor, in those vales of perennial beauty where angels shall be thy companions, and Jesus the light of thy heart, mayest thou live and be happy forever.'

Second.

Morning. Ps. lxxvi.

Evening. Luke viii. 22–40.

LIKE him from whom the Legion had been cast out, my soul would abide with Jesus. But as the Savior came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, so He calls His followers not to ease, nor the mere enjoyment of friendship or social life, but to toil, to labor, to the setting forth how great things Jesus hath done for us. Not till the labor of life is done, shall the faithful enter into their rest.

Soul, seek not thy rewards, thy rest, in the present! Labor on in patience; thy rest draweth nigh, when thou shalt dwell evermore in the mansions prepared for the blessed. How hast thou been laboring for these few past hasty weeks? Hast thou gained the strength thou purposed? Hast thou kept thy high resolves? Hast thou climbed toward the celestial city as rapidly as time has hurried thee onward to the narrow house? Or hast thou slumbered on the way, dreaming that the end was yet far before thee? Dost thou know that it is yet far in the future? O my soul, even now and here lift up thy head to a higher and nobler life and labor! The night hasteth on wherein thou canst not work if thou wouldst.

Third.

Morning. Ps. lxxvii. Evening. Luke viii. 41.

GIVE me, Heavenly Father, at the close of this day, that sincere repentance for all my errors, that earnest and heartfelt purpose of amendment, which will enable me to exercise such faith and love as shall meet Thy favor and make me whole. Speak Thou to my soul that inward peace that naught but the approving voice of a Savior can bestow. Infuse within my very being such a love for Thee as will beget the most perfect obedience, and will enable me to cast all my fears and anxieties on Thee. Why should I, whose labors all are naught, give myself solicitude, if my Heavenly Father has the governance of all things? O that I might rest in a thorough and profound repose on Him whose eyes never slumber, and whose power is never circumscribed!

O Lord, my only Redeemer, now would I draw near to Thee in my inmost spirit, and behold Thy face. Now would I feel within that I am Thine, that Thou art mine. O work in my heart, and make me an accepted child! Increase, O Lord, my faith and obedience. May I be more faithful in prayer, in reading the Word, and in every daily duty.

[illegible]

Morning. Evening.
Ps. lxxviii. 1-24. [illegible]

At this fading hour of day, let me withdraw from the turmoil and heat of life to sweet and secret communion of the soul with God, to meet me the unfelt spirit of the Holy One. Jesus found it comforting to His worn and weary soul to seek more immediately an undisturbed communion with Him who is, to man, the Source of all wisdom, strength, purity, and consolation. Come to me, God of all my thoughts, and in this hour dwell within my heart, filling me with all Thy gracious fulness. Grant me now such a repentance, such a yielding all to Thy will, as will enable me to feel Thou art verily with me.

"O God, pour on me the spirit of grace and supplication. Teach me to pray. Give me more and more to feel its necessity, and to have experience of its power. Send me a token of encouragement from Thy sanctuary: and let me have the present, the sublime satisfaction of knowing that there is the reality of a living intercourse between God and my soul. Above all, my Father in heaven, give me the saving and spiritual manifestation of the truth as it is in Jesus. Admit me into a full and intimate fellowship with the Father and with the Son.

Fifth.

Morning. Ps. lxxviii. 25-39.

Evening. Luke ix. 23-36.

"O JESUS, be my helper! Loose me from the sad infirmity under which I labor! Say to me, Go in peace, and be healed of thy plague—the plague of a false delicacy, which makes me ashamed of the testimony of Christ. O for more of zeal in His cause —and not zeal only, but zeal and wisdom together. I pray, O God, for a miracle of grace to be put forth upon me, that mine henceforth may be not the heart only, but the history of a new creature."

"Jesus, and shall it ever be,
A mortal man ashamed of thee!
Ashamed of thee, whom angels praise,—
Whose glories shine through endless days!

"Ashamed of Jesus!—that dear Friend
On whom my hopes of heaven depend;
No!—when I blush, be this my shame,—
That I no more revere his Name.

"Ashamed of Jesus!—yes, I may,
When I've no guilt to wash away;
No tear to wipe, no good to crave,
No fears to quell, no soul to save.

"Till then—nor is my boasting vain—
Till then, I boast a Savior slain;
And O, may this my glory be,—
That Christ is not ashamed of me."

Sixth.

Morning.
Ps. lxxviii. 40–55.

Evening.
Luke ix. 37.

SINCE first I sought to be a disciple of my Master, have I never looked back to the world with a desire to return to its pleasures? Have its vanities, its gilded show, its luxuries, its sinful gratifications, never held my longing eyes? Have I never felt that the Christian's was an unwelcome lot, thus to be deprived of so many sources of enjoyment? When I have seen the wicked in all his wickedness, flourishing like a green-bay tree, while from all my self-denial and humiliation of spirit I have reaped only discontent, and ceaseless, unrewarded toil, have I never felt that the Christian's harvest was but barrenness of heart and life, vanity and vexation of spirit?

O God of goodness, whenever these temptations assail our weary hearts, enable us to remember the divine teaching of our great Master—"Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus his evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." May that rest which is to come, ever make us strong in all Thy ways, O Lord, our strength, wisdom, and our portion.

Seventh.

Morning. Ps. lxxviii. 56.

Evening. Luke x. 1-20.

CAN it be that *my* name is written in heaven? *Is my name* in the great record Book of Eternal Life? Does it stand recorded there with those great and noble names—names of those holy saints who have lived and left their devout examples to bless the world? Shall I, in so few days, be with them, at rest in heaven, saved by grace? If this great joy be mine, well may I rather rejoice—yea, O Lord, I will rejoice with exceeding joy and thankfulness, yet not without fear, lest with a hope being left me, I should come short of it.

O thou blessed One, who came to earth that we might enter heaven, wilt Thou, at this hour, draw verily near, and pour upon our hearts and souls the dews of heaven? Grant unto me such a refreshing from Thy presence—such a view of the Better Land, that my heart shall be drawn away from earth, till heaven alone shall fill all its thoughts. O my Savior, come Thou, and refresh my thirsty spirit! Refresh also, at this hour, my fellow Pilgrim and all Associates. May this be an evening prayer of unwonted peace and joy to all our hearts! Breathe upon us all in our evening orison.

Eighth.

Morning. Ps. lxxix.

Evening. Luke x. 10–21.

Let me bow down and thank Thee, Savior, Holy and Blessed for evermore, that Thou hast taught us that that good part which Mary chose, shall never be taken from us. At the close of another day, I would sit at Thy feet and learn of the Way of Life. Sweet and compassionate Spirit of my Savior, come thou within my breast, transforming me into the image of the heavenly! May my heart be as the clay in the hands of the potter. Mould me as Thou wilt.

As I look within, and as I examine my outward life, can I discern that image of my Savior, which assures me that I have, in truth, that better part? Let, O Lord, thine image be constantly more and more impressed upon my very being. Why should I wish to live without Thee, Thou who art my Glory, my Blessing, my All! "Come, thou blessed Enlightener, Quickener, Sanctifier, and inspire this dull, cold heart! Touched as with a live coal, may the flame of a holy love to Thee be rekindled on its altar. Do thou invigorate my languishing affections. May I realize my dependence on Thee for every pulsation of spiritual life. Without Thee I perish."

Ninth.

Morning. Ps. lxxx. Evening. Luke xi. 1-13.

"Ask and it shall be given. Seek and ye shall find. If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give good gifts to them that ask Him."

Precious, precious words of consolation to the straying, sinful children of disobedience. O Thou infinitely compassionate and blessed Savior, that hast so abundantly and freely offered us pardon and acceptance, what can my poor heart render unto Thee for its thousand obligations! With my soul filled with a sense of the deepest gratitude, and with my lips touched to songs of praise and thanksgiving, would I come and bow before Thee, O Lord.

Yet this is all as nothing. I am nothing, I can do nothing worthy Thy notice; in my inmost soul I feel my utter unworthiness. O my Heavenly Father, I am only worthy to lift up my head before Thee, because I have been made the object of such astonishing mercy and grace. Blessed, blessed Father, may I, in my evening prayer, meet Thee, and be able to render some feeble expression of my gratitude.

Tenth.

Morning. Ps. lxxxi.

Evening. Luke xi. 14–36.

O THOU, who art the Light of the world, let Thy cheering, purifying beams shine within the darkness of my soul. O give me wisdom; give me understanding; give me tenderness of heart, and purity of purpose, that I may be enabled to see Thee; and seeing, love and learn to obey. May a proper appreciation of my darkness and ignorance, lead to unfeigned humility, to unremitting labor, and to high resolves. Now help me to determine to attain to a higher walk, a purer life, a more perfect consecration of all to Thee and Thy cause. May my heart be opened to Divine illumination.

"Expand thy wings, celestial Dove,
And, brooding o'er our nature's night,
Call forth the ray of heavenly love,
And let there in our souls be light;
Illuminate the dark abyss
With glorious beams of endless bliss.

"Let there be light, again command,
And light there in our hearts shall be;
We then, through faith, shall understand
Thy great mysterious majesty;
And by the shining of thy grace,
Behold in Christ Thy glorious face."

Eleventh.

Morning. Ps. lxxxii. Evening. Luke xi. 37.

CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATES, do we, at this our hour of prayer and meditation, looking down into the depths of our hearts, find there that purity, that meekness, that love of holiness and God, which fears not the scrutiny of His all-searching eye, but which invites its inspection, that the hidden evils may be made manifest? O my esteemed Friend, why should *we* not attain to that holiness which will ally us to angels and God? Let us now offer the sincere and earnest prayer of faith, that we may be made the objects of His infinite grace—that all our sins and pollution may be swept away forever, and our thirsty souls refreshed with the water of salvation—that brighter visions of the glory to be revealed may be given to encourage our fainting hearts.

Come, Spirit of Purity, Spirit of Holiness, abide in our hearts, and make us clean every whit. Enable us now to lay all on the altar of sacrifice: then, and not till then, may we hope for this great favor. Then wilt Thou abide within us a constant guest, giving us Thine own peace, joy, and consolation, and foreshadowing to our spirits those immortal pleasures which are at Thy right hand.

Twelfth.

Morning.
Ps. lxxxiii.

Evening.
Luke xii. 1–21.

SOLEMNLY and thoughtfully would I let this admonition of my Savior sink into my heart. Let me never flatter myself that I have much goods laid up for many years. Perhaps even while gentle sleep is resting sweetly on the heavy lids, in the silent watches of the night, He who made me what I am, may say to me, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee."

O God of Mercy, shouldst Thou thus speak to me, how all unprepared should I be to meet the summons! Forbid that I should rest in the quiet dream that I shall not be called away for many long years; let me rather this evening, and every night, as I close my eyes to all earthly things, commend myself to Thy mercy and compassion, as if conscious this was my last privilege of prayer. Thus would I now commend myself, and all those near and dear to me, to Thine infinite grace, O God of Mercy! Spare us, pity us, forgive us, and save us, for Thy Son's sake, and remember us in the day when Thou shalt make up Thy jewels. We have nothing we can offer Thee; it is all of Thine infinite mercy and compassion.

Thirteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxxxiv. Evening. Luke xii. 22–40.

WITH what solicitude and anxiety do we toil and labor, till life is spent, to care for ourselves; as if there was no Providential Hand which meted out to us all life's measures.

Toiling, toiling, ever toiling,
In the weary, ceaseless strife;
Sighing, sighing, ever sighing
O'er the brevity of life;
Toiling on till life is gone,
Weary, weary, ever weary;
Yet sighing still, again to fill
The cup of life so dreary.

O inconsistent Soul, looking toward Heaven, yet ever loving earth; trusting soon to have a home above, yet ever troubled with the present; relying on the protecting arm of God, yet ever fearful of the future! Soul, thou heir of immortal bliss, look upward; behold thy Savior, and doubt no more. If thou art

Winging, winging, ever winging,
Upward, upward, upward still;
Singing, singing, ever singing
Of thy Savior and His will.
He will lead thee, He will feed thee,
Guard thee by a hand divine;
Watching ever, leaving never,
Till, in heaven, He is thine.

Fourteenth.

Morning. Pa. lxxxv.

Evening. Luke xii. 41.

If much is to be required where much is given, then verily ought my labors to be abundant and ceaseless. What privileges do I continually enjoy! What mercies and favors this day, yea, every hour! How few of the children of men are so highly favored! How few have been blessed with such opportunities for instruction! How few have lived in the constant enjoyment of so much happiness as it has pleased a kind Heavenly Father to pour into my bosom!

What then must be my obligations! Are my labors for my Maker as much more abundant above those of others, as are my enjoyments? Will not multitudes of those who have sat in the regions of darkness rise up in the judgment and condemn me, for that, with infinitely less privilege, they have wrought out more, and with a greater singleness of heart, and singleness of purpose?

O Thou, who art my strength, aid me in that which I would now desire and resolve upon—the complete discharge of every duty. Keep me in this high purpose. O be Thou with me, to guide, then shall I not stray; to sustain, then shall I not fail.

Fifteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxxxvi.

Evening. Luke xiii. 1-17.

KIND and indulgent Father, how infinite is Thy mercy, and how unchangeable Thy goodness and Thy tender kindness! Long dost Thou suffer our unfaithfulness, and bear with our transgressions; never withdrawing Thy watchful eye, or withholding Thy fostering hand; ever calling unto us to come unto Thee, that we may find rest to our souls. If this long-continued favor and forbearance of Thy love, work in us no return of gratitude, no thankfulness, no disposition of heart to love and serve Thee —alas that there should be such a heart—then wilt Thou cut us down as worse than cumberers of the ground.

O Savior of fallen man, who dost know all our weaknesses, with all my idleness, my failures, my waywardness, do I not still love Thee above all things? Thou seest my heart; is it not Thine? Spare Thou me, O compassionate Redeemer! spare Thou me and my Associate for a little space, and we will strive anew to be faithful. Beloved Fellow Pilgrim, does not thy soul also breathe this prayer?

Let us, to-night, pray especially for each other, that we may be faithful to the end.

Sixteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxxxvii. Evening. Luke xiii. 18.

THE success of devotion is far more dependent upon habitual deportment and tempers than upon any fervors or faith of the closet. A day that has been spent in folly and sin, cannot be closed in profitable and consolatory devotion. It has reared up a barrier in the way of access to God. It may furnish many an affecting theme for confession and repentance—and forgiveness is never far from the humble penitent—but it is vain to imagine that there is in the Gospel any provision in virtue of which we may pass from the contaminating scenes of worldly pleasure into communion with the Holy Spirit.

None but the watchful, the pure, and the painstaking, can profit greatly by prayer. Prayer has no efficacy to atone for the obliquities of a perverse life, nor can it find pardon for sins into which we have contentedly fallen to-day, and which we have no purpose to shun to-morrow. Devotion will be profitable according only as the deportment has been blameless, and the motives pure.

OLIN.

Seventeenth.

Morning. Ps. lxxxviii. Evening. Luke xiv.

"How sweet the hour of twilight prayer and meditation—when, forgetting earth and earthly toys, we repose in the full assurance of faith, purely and implicitly upon our Father in heaven! After a day of toil and disquietude, like a heaven-sent messenger comes holy twilight, with its peaceful hours.

As the golden light of day fades softly in the dusky distance, how the spirit yearns for its home above—that blissful and everlasting rest in reservation! What is there else that can satisfy these ceaseless cravings of the soul? In enjoyment as in infirmity we feel it; and it is only when relying solely upon a Savior's love—which sin cannot weary, or time destroy or change—that we realize in part the ineffable joy of a glorified immortal.

All-merciful One, in these soul-breathings after Thee, pour upon us the continual dew of Thy blessing, and the constant sunlight of Thy favor."

"O Savior, welcome to my heart;
Possess thy humble throne;
Bid every rival, Lord, depart,
And reign, O Christ, alone."

Eighteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxxxix. 1-18. Evening. Luke xv.

"*I* WILL arise and go to *my* Father, and will say to Him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son: make me as one of Thy hired servants."

How have I been prodigal of the blessings Thou hast bestowed, wasting, upon foolish and hurtful appetites and desires, my temporal and spiritual substance. Ere the famine shall come upon me, when my soul shall be perishing for sustenance, I would return to my Father's house, that there I may abide forever.

Forgive me, O forgive me, Father full of all goodness and compassion. Let me, at this hour of prayer, hear Thy Spirit witnessing with mine, the lost is found. O give me an assurance that my disobedience, my wanderings, are no more remembered by Thee. I confess all, I would hide nothing from Thee; I have sinned, I have departed from Thy commandments; yet, O my Father, Jesus has died for me, and His merits I bring as my all-atoning sacrifice. For His sake, wilt Thou forgive and receive me to Thy love! He is worthy, infinitely worthy! For His sake be merciful.

Nineteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxxxix. 19–37.

Evening. Luke xvi. 1–13.

REMEMBERED FRIEND of early days, with whom I have passed many an hour of happiness, and around whose association lingers a halo of pleasing recollections, gilding the past and gladdening the present, would I could kneel with thee at this our hour of prayer, and hear thy voice ascending with its offering of praise and thanksgiving!

I trust thou hast not forgotten one who, in days long past, ever felt for thee, and still often speaks thy name at the Mercy-Seat. Though we may meet no more for long and weary years, perchance till life has waned and scattered the glory of youth and all its fancies and enchantments—perchance no more in time—whenever we shall meet again, may it be ours to feel that God is still our Father, and Heaven our final home—that, as we were ever friends on earth, so we shall be forever friends above. May it be ours, hand in hand with angels, to walk those realms where the heart shall never throb with sorrow, and where tears are never shed; where the sinless spirit may forever be happy in the smile of the loved, and in the satisfying consciousness of our Father's constant favor and blessing!

Twentieth.

Morning. Ps. lxxxix. 38. Evening. Luke xvi. 14.

How infinitely was Lazarus the gainer, to have received his evil things in this life, rather than, with the rich man, to have fared sumptuously, to have enjoyed all that life can offer, and yet at last to have lost heaven, and lost it forever!

When trials and adversity fall upon and beset me, when sickness touches me with its palsying hand, or want comes upon me like an armed man, may I then remember, in all my trouble, that God's eye of tenderness is never withdrawn from me—that a few short days passed, and the hour of my redemption shall come! Then, O God of infinite mercies, in the richness of that grace which is able to save to the uttermost, may I be borne of angels to the bosom of my all-atoning Redeemer!

When I see those around me in the enjoyment of all temporal pleasures—which I am denied, courted and flattered while I am neglected and despised, let no envy ever enter my bosom, for they may be receiving their good things in this life. Thou canst, O my soul, well afford to be a beggar in this world of sin and darkness, if thou art an heir to a crown of immortal glory in heaven.

Twenty-First.

Morning. Ps. xc. Evening. Luke xvii. 1–19.

THOU, O LORD, hast made me, and hast given me all that I possess of mind, of health, of friends, or of worldly goods. Meet it is that I should labor for Thee with all my powers to the end of life. But what can such a worthless being do? When I have filled the measure of my days, even, if, with a single eye, I have spent all for Thee, it is as nothing; I shall still be an unprofitable servant.

My labor is weakness; my wisdom, blindness; my rectitude, error; what, therefore, O Lord, can I do that is worthy of Thee? Yet, forasmuch as Thou wilt accept and bless every effort of Thy humble and loving children, gladly will I strive to do Thy will.

Assist me, Heavenly Father, in all the various trials of life, and the uncertainties of my own judgment, constantly to seek Thy mind and purpose. I am too slow to seek divine instruction when I most need it. May Thy Spirit be so within me, that I may become, in all my thoughts, but a reflection, an outworking, of Thyself! May it not be of myself, but of Christ that dwelleth in me! May I listen more earnestly and more frequently to hear the voice of the Spirit in my soul!

Twenty-Second.

Morning. Pa. xci. Evening. Luke xvii. 20.

ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father! We have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done, and done those things which we ought not to have done; and there is no health in us. But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare thou those that confess their faults. Restore thou those who are penitent, according to thy promises declared in Christ Jesus our Lord. And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life, to the glory of thy holy Name.

Almighty God, who seest that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves, keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

COMMON PRAYER.

Twenty-Third.

Morning. Ps. cxii.

Evening. Luke xviii. 1-17.

When I would come into Thy presence, O Most High, give me the preparatory influences of Thy Spirit, that it may be with a becoming humiliation of manner, thought, and emotion. May I never be so unmindful of my own unworthiness, nor of Thy greatness and majesty, as to rush thoughtlessly and carelessly before Thee! Remembering that I am but weakness and frailty, ignorance and sin, may I bow, as is meet, in penitent contrition for my manifold transgressing, in gratitude for Thy continued favor, and in thankful praise for Thy promises of future good!

O may I never be so forgetful of my vileness, or so puffed with pride, as to plead before Thee my deeds of righteousness, or my obedience to Thy law! Make me to feel, that, of myself, I am utterly consumed of sin, and am not worthy so much as to lift my eyes to heaven.

O Thou Blessed One, so may I ever come to Thee, in meekness and simplicity, penitence and faith, that Thou canst answer me with all needful earthly blessings, and the richer gifts of Thy forgiving grace and presence! Remember me, O Lord, in mercy.

Twenty-fourth.

Morning. Pa. xciii.

Evening. Luke xviii. 18.

HOME, blessed, thrice blessed place! What enchantment ever reigns around the spot where the new-born spirit first looked upon this lower world! What mysterious spell binds us to its hills and vales, its rocks and rills?

These were God's first gifts to our childish hearts, and our early love entwined around them, and claimed them as its own, and holds them still. Home! that little paradise still left on earth to image heaven to our hearts. O how the hearts of home do knit and weave themselves into one, till but one throb of joy or sorrow trembles through the whole! Home—where wandering angels nestle in a love like that of Paradise—where, worn and weary with life's pilgrimage, lifting their eyes to their long-lost heaven, they pour, unseen, their tears of joy or sorrow and discouragement into each other's sympathizing bosoms, in the only earthly wish that here, O home of the heart, they may ever dwell; and, life's pilgrimage done, here, amid the loved and loving, they may gently pass away. Yet, O blessed Jesus, for those that leave all to follow Thee, Thou hast a far more glorious home in the mansions of Thy Grace.

Twenty-fifth.

Morning. Ps. xciv. 1-16. Evening. Luke xix. 1-27.

ASSOCIATE, in the midst of the multifarious excitements of life, oppressed with its duties and labors, have we been seeking to serve our Master with singleness of heart, with faithfulness and zeal?

He has bid us occupy till He comes. It may be many days; it may be few. Have we sought to be as faithful as if we thought it few? Are all the powers and opportunities committed to us, disposed in such a manner, that, when the Master shall come, He will say to us, "Well done, good and faithful servant?" *Am* I a faithful servant? Hast thou been faithful, beloved Associate? *Can* the Master say to us, "good and faithful servants?" Do not, the rather, our constantly neglected duties give us just cause to fear, that we can but be called "wicked and slothful?" Have we not often reluctantly engaged in His service, and often utterly refused? Is there not many a talent yet hidden and unused, and has there not been many a one abused and squandered, many a one made the minister of evil to the soul?

Lord God of all goodness and mercy, let us not slumber! O awaken us to true, sincere, and faithful activity!

Twenty-Sixth.

Morning. Ps. xciv. 11.

Evening. Luke xix. 28.

"AND when he was come near, he beheld the city and wept over it."

He came to teach them, but they closed their ears to His instructions. He pointed to the way of truth, but in scorn and derision they kept their way of error. He plead with them, while they returned reproaches and abuse. He lifted His hands to bless, but they fell upon Him with maledictions; and when He offered to them life, they clamored for His death. Yet no unkindness fell from His lips. He saw their hearts, knew their love of sin, discerned the coming judgment, and, in that heart which ever beats in sympathy for human sorrow, the deep fountains of pity and compassion were stirred, and Jesus wept for those He loved but could not save.

So, compassionate Jesus, dost Thou ever pity me, and so would I, this evening, weep over my own sinful heart. When I look at its willfulness and perversity, I am often led to fear, that, after all my exalted privileges, my instructions, and my labors for heaven, I shall never be a faithful child of Thine; I shall utterly come short of Thy glory. O Blessed Savior, be Thou my Help!

Twenty-Seventh.

Morning. Pa. xcv. Evening. Luke xx. 1–26.

ANOTHER day is numbered with the irrevocable past; ere I close my eyes in slumber, I would commune with Thee, my Heavenly Father. Aid me now with Thine all-searching Spirit, that I may look within, and faithfully recount all the actions of the day. What have I accomplished? Have I done aught in the name of my Heavenly Master? Have I desired to check unholy thoughts, and to have a heart pure as those of the angels? Have I dealt in gentleness with all my fellows? Has there been no word of unkindness, no emotion of selfishness? Have I, in all things, been an example of Christian perfectness? Then may I go to my slumber with a heart filled with holy peace, and an unfaltering trust in the goodness and mercy of God.

Yet, when I have done all that my sinful heart would do, all that my imperfect judgment discerns best, all that conscience incites me toward, I am far, far from holiness. Wherefore, now let me bow before the Lord, and humbly and sincerely implore, in the Name of my Redeemer, mercy and forgiveness. In Thy compassion, O my Lord, remember me. Remember also all the loved.

Twenty-Eighth.

Morning. Ps. xcvi. Evening. Luke xx. 27.

Rejoice, O my soul, and bless the Lord thy Maker and Redeemer, for this which thy Savior hath taught thee, that thou art a child of immortality—thou shalt not die—thine inheritance is with the angels, and thou shalt be forever a child of God. O glorious death and resurrection, that shall instate us with such honor! O Hope of Immortality, what a glory dost thou shed from Heaven back upon the darkness of this world!

Blessed be Thy name, O Thou Most Holy, Thou Most Compassionate, and Most Infinite! I will praise Thee forever, and for evermore. Thou hast made us mortal, that Thou mightest re-create us in a higher sphere, and crown us with a greater glory. Tune my lips to higher and nobler praise. And thou, my Associate, join thy voice with mine, and let us together make an offering of thanksgiving for His goodness. Let us kneel and render thanks for the blessed hope, that, though we must shortly be severed one from another, and sleep in the cold and cheerless narrow house, we shall then be permitted to live perpetually in the light of each other's love, and in our Heavenly Father's smile, in that world all glorious in holiness.

Twenty-Ninth.

Morning. Ps. xcvii. Evening. Luke xxi. 1-19.

I DESIRE a more interior communion with Thee, my Savior. My soul possesses not that consciousness of favor and sympathy that I would have it feel. I desire a realizing consciousness that God dwells within, regulating and controlling all to His perfect mind. I know I am welcomed to this high honor and enjoyment. I am assured that, if I properly open my heart, Jesus will come in and sup with me. May such a feast at this hour be mine! Yet I know that, after a day spent in carelessness or in voluntary sin, it is impossible to enjoy this sweet, calm, and holy communion with Him who knew no sin, and in whom dwells the fullness of the Godhead—with my Savior. If I have not followed Thee worthily this day, O Savior, enlighten my eyes that I may henceforth shun the error; and now, O Holy Spirit, come and brood over my heart, and touch it to holy emotions. Give me now to feel Thy gentle influences, assuring me that my prayer is heard, my offering accepted, my name written in the Book of Life, and that Jesus owns me for His child. Thus may Jesus speak to your heart. Associate, at this hour.

Thirtieth.

Morning. Ps. xcviii. Evening. Luke xxi. 20.

AVOID not only sins, but the incentives and occasions to sin. A man cannot stop where he would; and he that will be tampering with dangerous occasions, in confidence of his resolution, shall find himself often carried beyond his purpose. If you pray, then watch, too; but as that word commands our diligence, so this imports our weakness in ourselves, and our strength to be in another: that as we watch we must pray, and without this we shall watch in vain, and be a prey to our enemy.

Truly, had we no power beyond our own, we might give over, and be hopeless of coming through to salvation—so many enemies and hazards in the way. Alas! might a Christian say, looking upon the multitude of temptations without, and corruptions within himself, and the weakness of the grace he hath, "How can this be? Shall I ever attain my journey's end?" But when he looks upward, and lifts his eyes above his difficulties, beholds the strength of God engaged for him, directs his prayer to Him for help, and is assured to find it; this upholds him, and answers all.

ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

Rules of Morning Worship.

BY DR. DODDRIDGE.

Rise as soon as your health and other occasions shall permit; but it is good to be as regular as you can, and as early.

At your opening your eyes, enter upon the day with some act of piety. Of thanksgiving for the preservation of you the night past. Of the glorification of God for the works of creation, or anything for the honor of God.

When you are dressed, retire yourself to your closet, and go to your usual devotions.

Let your reading be not of the whole Bible in order, but for your devotion use the New Testament, and such portions of the Old as contain the precepts of a holy life.

These portions which you use in your prayers, let them not be long, but what time you can afford spend it in thinking and meditating upon the holy precepts which you read.

Before you go forth of your closet, sit yourself down a little while, and consider what you are to do this day, what matter of business is like to employ or tempt you; and when you enter upon it, remember upon what you resolved in your closet.

MAY.

first.

Morning. Ps. xcix.

Evening. Luke xxii. 1-20.

APRIL, with thy smiles and tears, thine ever-changeful skies, picturing life's checkered scene, farewell! Thy golden hours, which ever came laden with joy and blessing, have fled, bearing, for me, many a treasure to the Hereafter. Farewell! for I know not that, in the land of the living, I shall see thy welcome face again. When thou dost come to bid the earth robe herself once more in her glorious and gay attire, perchance it may be thine to water and embellish a little turfy mound that shall enroof all that remains of me, perhaps of my loved Fellow Pilgrim.

Yet, should I never see thee more, will I not be sad, for thou dost teach me of the never-failing

mercies of the Omnipotent—that though all may perish in the fierce and chilling blasts of Winter, Spring shall come again, with its flood of joy and beauty—that, though the desolating hand of time sweeps from our hearts every bright and beauteous thing, leaving it but a waste sere and barren, the future has, remember, in its mysterious unfoldings, another and a richer world of the true, the beautiful, and the loving. Wherefore, amid the gladness of universal nature, shall my heart be strong and happy in the hope of joys to come.

Hail, beauteous May! Smile of Infinite Beneficence, all hail with thy forest carols, thy laughing hill-side rills, thy soft unfolding leaves, and dainty-tinted petals! O how I love thee, sweet, blushing, blooming Spring! O come and nestle in my heart, and whisper to my spirit of that fadeless Spring where angel hands touch to infinite perfection all its matchless flowers and deathless beauties, where we shall live eternally in the bloom of youth—where night, and weariness, and age come not—where the smile of the Father is the cloudless light of the soul.

With my heart retouched to thankful praise and devotion, let me, as I journey on adown this cheerful slope into the sunny vale of the summer, be ever ready, with my loins begirt, my lamp atrim, listing my summons away to that brighter, happier Land.

Second.

Morning. Ps. c., ci. Evening. Luke xxii. 21-46.

GIVE us, O Lord, to be faithful to our sacramental vows; and preserve us from the dread enormity of having sat at His table, and yet abjuring our faithfulness. Give me, O Lord, to be humble both in reference to others, and also in myself. In honor may I prefer my brethren; and when I think of my own miserable weakness, may I renounce all confidence in myself, and cast my whole dependence on Him who came to destroy the work of the devil, and be the Captain of their salvation to all who trust in Him. Protect me, O Lord Jesus, from the works and the wiles of the great adversary; and let not Satan have the advantage over me.

O may these mysterious agonies enhance my every conception of what Christ hath done and suffered for my sake; and also my every feeling of gratitude, that the constraining influence of His love for me might lead me to love Him back again. May I be enabled to imitate Him in suffering, and above all in prayer. Let me not be tempted, O God, above what I am able to bear.

CHALMERS.

Third.

Morning. Ps. cii. 1-15. Evening. Luke xxii. 47.

O Thou Savior of erring man, who art ever present to do us good, whose heart is never shut to the cry of the needy, and whose arm is never shortened that it cannot save, if, in any hour of trial, I should be overborne; if the fear of man should, in any moment of weakness, lead me to turn away from Thee; if the blandishments of earthly pleasure, or the enchantments of Satan, should lead me into captivity, O Thou who art my only Deliverer, wilt Thou turn and look upon me as Thou didst upon Peter, and call me back again?

Let me not wander away from Thee, my Maker! Let not the cares and pleasures of life enter into my heart, and lead me to forget Thee; but in Thine all-restraining grace, withhold Thou me from following my evil impulses. Be Thou round about me as a wall of fire!

O Thou, who knowest me better than I can know myself, to whom should I flee for safety but unto Thee? Thou only art great! Thou only art merciful! Be Thou my Friend and my Surety. I cast myself into Thy arms! O Jesus, receive me and care for me!

Fourth.

Morning. Ps. cii. 16.

Evening. Luke xxiii. 1–25.

As I follow my Savior in His humiliation, how do my own trials, at which I so often hesitate and stumble, vanish into nothing! What have I ever suffered for my Master's cause? What have I ever sacrificed? What cross have I borne to-day in His behalf, and for His name's sake? Is it because there is naught that I may do? Is it because there are no trials to be borne—no labor, no toil, no burdens? Or is it that I am unwilling to see my duty, or inquire for it? Did I earnestly seek to follow in the footsteps of my Lord, how soon should I find that the disciple shall be as his Master!

Let me feel that it is justly a cause of alarm if the eye of an evil world find no occasion of offence in me—if they discern not that I am not of them.

May I, Heavenly Father, put on more of the spirit of Jesus, which shrinks not at reproach or suffering, but which, with divine meekness and steadfastness, follows duty wherever it may lead. O give me of this spirit in large measure!

Let me ever be jealous of the flattery of the world, and of that ease and contentment which gives no longing for the "rest that remaineth."

Fifth.

Morning. Ps. ciii. 1-12.

Evening. Luke xxiii. 26.

I WOULD meditate upon the wonderful manifestation of our Savior's divinity and excellence in His dying moments. While in His own terrible agonies, how unmindful of Himself, and how devoted only to doing good to fallen man! To His followers, He gives words of encouragement and counsel; for His persecutors, He offers a prayer of forgiveness; to the penitent thief, assurance of pardon and favor.

O immaculate Son of God, let us often linger round the Cross, and strive to take within our hearts the touching lessons of its mysterious wisdom, goodness, and compassion! Bestow upon us, Heavenly Father, at this hour, as we contemplate the world's Great Sacrifice, a deeper and more abiding sense of our infinite indebtedness to Thee. Assist us to realize more thoroughly that life has but one great end, one great purpose; and enable us, in a more complete and thorough consecration, to render back to Thee our entire being. O Savior, my Savior, Thou who hast given Thyself for me, I would give myself away to Thee. Take me, mould me into the image of Thy holiness, that henceforth I may live more worthy of my redemption.

Sixth.

Morning. Ps. ciii. 13. Evening. Luke xxiv. 1-27.

OFTEN, in this lone pilgrimage, does Jesus draw near and walk with us, but our eyes are holden that we see Him not. Savior, too pure and holy for erring mortals to behold, wilt Thou so anoint my spirit eyes, that I may discern Thy glorious image; so attune my spirit ear to the harmonies of heaven, that I may catch the tender accents of Thy voice; so touch my heart to spirit sympathies, that I may feel the consolations of Thy perpetual love!

Savior, Thou art ever with us, but we see Thee not. In the sweet carols of Spring; in the requiem of Autumn; in the laughter of early innocence; in the smile of friends and fortune; in the solitude of my own deep retirement; and in the sad and melancholy moanings of tearful desolation, may I be ever able to catch Thy voice speaking to my heart, "Fear not, I am with Thee."

O God of goodness, be Thou very near to us! In this world of disappointed hopes, hollow friendships, bleeding and broken hearts, be Thou to me and to my cherished, ever present Fellow Pilgrim, that Friend in whom our hearts may rest in peace and love.

Seventh.

Morning. Ps. civ. 1-15. Evening. Luke xxiv. 28.

At dreamy, mystic twilight hour, as we have gazed at the glory of the dying day—image of the spirit land,—how often has our Savior—vesper Star of human hopes,—wooed our thoughts to holy things, and talked with us of heaven, while our fettered souls have longed to rise with Him to its holiness.

Or, when we have wandered back in spirit dreams to the days of early affection, sat again in its shattered bowers, now deserted forever; sought again the circle of friendship, now scattered to be gathered no more; and looked for the loved who lived in our hearts—the idols of our warmest devotion, but to find they have gone to their rest, and their hearts are as still as the chamber wherein they are sleeping,—as we have wandered thus amid the wrecks of the past, till sorrow has gathered around us its sable pall, and naught is left to the soul but silent tears for the loved but lost—sweet tears that soothe the grief the heart cannot bear—O how precious then have been the Savior's communings! how gentle His accents of mercy, how have they cheered the disconsolate soul! and how have we felt, "Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot heal."

Eighth.

Morning. Ps. civ. 16. Evening. John i. 1–28.

O THOU who art the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, be pleased to enlighten my darkened understanding, and quicken my slumbering conscience. Make me truly to discern the way of life. Whatever in me is dark, illume; whatever vile, remove; whatever weak, strengthen with that strength which is able to overcome all things.

I feel my darkness of soul, and come to Thee, O Sun of righteousness. I know not myself, nor my sins. I know not the way of rectitude, for sin hath blinded my conscience and perverted my judgment. How far from the path of truth must I be, to Him who is all light, even when I would, with all diligence, seek the narrow way!

O Lord God of my never-dying spirit, how shall I wander away into danger and death, if Thou be not my Guide! O take me now, and let me feel that my right hand clasps my Savior's. Let me feel that I am safe, for Thou dost lead me. Henceforth may I trust my all with Thee, and feel Thou dost accept me, and wilt surely and safely lead me through this evil world, and through the dark valley, to the light and glory beyond!

Ninth.

Morning. Ps. cv. 1-22. Evening. John i. 29.

THOU LAMB OF GOD, that takest away the sin of the world, let my heart be touched with the merits of this great Atonement. Let it receive of Thee a new life and spirit—not only a sense of forgiveness and acceptance, but a spirit of sacrifice and consecration, of faith and prayer.

Confessing before Thee all the errors of my past neglect, O God of goodness, before I close the labor of another day, I would feel that peace within, which only a full assurance of pardon and favor can bestow. In the Name of my Great Atonement, I come, O God most merciful, and present myself and the friends Thou hast, in Thy kindness, given me—for Christ's sake pardon us all the offences of the day, and of our lives. We are unworthy, but in Thy great compassion remember us. If any of us have wandered away from Thee, now be pleased to restore us.

O Heavenly Father, forasmuch as Christ is our plea, forsake Thou not us. O keep us all, by Thy preserving grace, safe in all life's wanderings, and gather us, at last, with Him who has purchased us with His own death and sufferings.

Tenth.

Morning. Ps. cv. 23. Evening. John ii.

ASSOCIATES! all who with us read and meditate, in this evening's worship, let us, in grateful acknowledgment of that dignity and honor to which our Savior has elevated the purest and tenderest affections of the human heart, come before His presence with especial thanks and gratitude for the kind friends He has given each of us, and with especial prayer in their behalf.

O Thou, who hast taught us that God is love, and whose only commandment is that "we love one another," wilt Thou be in all our friendships, controlling our thoughts, holding our hearts, that they may not become absorbed with aught that will not lift us nearer Thee? Blessed Savior, be pleased to sanctify our affections, and make these richest of earth's enjoyments the ministers of Heaven to our hearts. *Make us faithful to each other* in friendship and in duty; and, O Thou who hast made us all we are, and given us these blessed ties that bind us to the loved, O wilt Thou give us those to love who shall be our guardian friends on earth, and angel friends in heaven! Thou hast taught us that the good we love on earth shall be ours again in Heaven.

Eleventh.

Morning. Ps. cvi. 1-18.

Evening. John iii.

WHAT a full and precious chapter is this! Let us seek, and strive, and pray for this regeneration; and as Paul travailed in birth till Christ was formed in his converts, so may we cease not from the agonies which precede this consummation—cease not from the toils and the sufferings of that violence by which the kingdom of heaven should be assailed, till we have taken it by force. We know not the way of the Spirit; but we are told the way by which the Holy Spirit may be made ours; He is given to them that ask Him. Let us ask till we receive. O that we were alive to the greatness of the distinction between the flesh and spirit, and so to the great moral distance which we have to traverse ere we are in a state it will do to die in! It is by believing in Christ that this transition is effected, or that we pass from death unto life. CHALMERS.

Grant us all now so to believe in Christ, our only hope, that we may experience that new birth of the spirit, whereby it may be truly said we are born of God. May we ever remember that God is a Spirit, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit!

Twelfth.

Morning. Ps. cvi. 19–33. Evening. John iv. 1–27.

"SHOW US THE FATHER."

Have ye not seen Him, when through parted snows
Wake the first kindlings of the vernal green?
When 'neath its modest veil the arbutus blows,
And the pure snow-drop bursts its folded screen?
When the wild rose, that asks no florist's care,
Unfoldeth its rich leaves,—have ye not seen Him there?

Have ye not seen Him when the infant's eye,
Through its bright sapphire windows, shows the mind?
When, in the trembling of the tear or sigh,
Floats forth that essence, trembling and refined?
Saw ye not Him, the Author of our trust,
Who breathed the breath of life into a frame of dust?

Have ye not *heard* Him when the tuneful rill
Casts off its icy chains and leaps away?
In thunders, echoing from the hill?
In every song of birds at break of summer's day?
Or in the ocean's everlasting roar,
Battling the gray old rocks that sternly guard his shore?

Amid the stillness of the sabbath morn,
When vexing cares in tranquil slumber rest,
When in the heart the holy thought is born,
And Heaven's high impulse warms the wailing breast,
Have ye not felt Him, while your kindling prayer
Swelled out in tones of praise, announcing God was there?

MRS. SIGOURNEY.

Thirteenth.

Morning. Ps. cvi. 34. Evening. John iv. 36.

"AND he that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto life eternal."

Soul, hearest thou this message of thy Master? Associate, hearest thou? Is it ours to gather, from the wayside of our journey, fruit unto life eternal? Are so feeble ones as we, invited to stand beside our divine Master, and garner for the store of heaven? Can we, then, be idle? Can we yield to listlessness and torpor? Shall our hearts be faint, our hands be weary, or will we not toil on with all the powers at our command?

Yea, esteemed companion of this weary pilgrimage, sharer of my toils and trials, hopes and mercies, let us to each other and our God, here renew our vows. Give me again thy hand for a renewed consecration of life and all its labors to the Great Master. Let us toil while we have strength and heart—to-day, for to-morrow may not be ours—toil with purpose, energy, and thankfulness, till death shall bid us lay our sickle by. O my precious friend, when we may meet in that better world, may it be our exceeding joy to find each other bearing many sheaves!

Fourteenth.

Morning. Ps. cvii. 1–22. Evening. John v. 1–23.

Thou Blessed Fountain, opened for sin and uncleanness, my soul would plunge itself beneath Thy healing waters, that it may rise purified and regenerate. Strengthen my faith, O God, and enable me so to apprehend Jesus as the Savior of the world, that I may apply His all-cleansing blood to my guilty soul. Grant that, in like manner as I am ever penetrated with a sense of my own vileness, my total unfitness for the kingdom of heaven, so I may be able to attain to an equal consciousness that, in His name, and for His sake, I am freely forgiven, and my transgressions washed away.

Whatsoever prevents my attaining to such a consciousness, be pleased to remove. If my thoughts are not pleasing to Thee, if my desires are improperly restrained, if there be any evil way in me, O my Savior, in Thine own wisdom and goodness, and of Thine own power, be pleased to work within to the perfection of my nature.

And now, O Thou who art my All, as I close the labors of another day, may I have a full assurance of Thy favor, and sink to slumber guarded by the angels of Thy mercy!

February 11.

Morning. Ps. cvii. 28. Evening. John v. 24.

How quickly does my heart palpitate to the world's applause, and how doth flattery turn aside my purposes, and subvert my better judgment! What incessant vigilance do I need, lest it steal within, and gain my caressing favor as the meed of praise justly due. With what a winning smile doth it win its way! How gratefully, and with what honeyed sweetness, do its poisoned words fall upon the ever ready ear! Yet, when the heart hath but once been opened to its influences, how it draws us down from heaven, and binds us to the earth!

"O for greater singleness of aim!—more self-emptying and self-abasing—that He may be all in all! Lord, I am conscious often of mingled motives, that would not stand the test of Thy pure and Thy Holy Word! How often do I forfeit the joys of assurance by admitting rival claimants to the throne of my affections! How often are the surpassing interests and glories of eternity dimmed and obscured by the engrossing things of time and sense! How mixed with imperfection, and earthliness, and self-seeking, are my best attempts to serve Thee! Give me more of this unity and simplicity of purpose."

Sixteenth.

Morning.
Ps. cviii.

Evening.
[illegible]

ANOTHER day is done. As Jesus retired alone to the mountain-side, so let me withdraw from the world and its allurements, that I may more truly meditate upon my fleeting life and its responsibilities, upon heaven and its rewards, upon my Savior and His great sacrifice for man.

Draw near, O Spirit of Love Divine, and enable me to see how brief a step it is to the end of life—how few such pleasant days as this I have to live—how few more evening prayers I will be mine to offer—how few the hours of my life's great work, and how vast the interests at stake. Let me feel more fully, that, even while life is yet joyous and warm, and its labors looking for many years of accomplishment, the night may close upon me at an unexpected hour.

"Softly now the light of day
Fades upon my sight away;
Free from care, from labor free
Lord, we would commune with thee.

"Soon from us the light of day
Shall forever pass away;
Then, from sin and sorrow free,
Take us, Lord, to dwell with thee

fifteenth.

Morning. Ps. cvii. 23. Evening. John v. 24.

How quickly does my heart palpitate to the worl applause, and how doth flattery turn aside my p poses, and subvert my better judgment! What cessant vigilance do I need, lest it steal within, gain my caressing favor as the meed of praise ju due! With what a witching smile doth it win way! How gratefully, and with what hone sweetness, do its poisoned words fall upon the ready ear! Yet, when the heart hath but once l opened to its influences, how it draws us down f heaven, and binds us to the earth!

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SIXTH

Morning. [illegible]
Ps. cviii. [illegible]

ANOTHER day is done [illegible] the mountain-side [illegible] and its allurements [illegible] upon my fleeting life [illegible] heaven and its rewards [illegible] great sacrifice for man.

Draw near, [illegible] me to see how [illegible] how few such [illegible] how few more [illegible] offer—how few [illegible] how vast [illegible] fully, that [illegible] and its [illegible] ment, [illegible] hour.

[illegible]

Seventeenth.

Morning. Ps. cix. 1-20. Evening. John vi. 22-42

THOU alone, O Lord, art the bread of life and water of salvation to the hungry, famishing sou man. Thou alone canst satisfy these incessant sp longings. Thou art meat indeed and drink ind There is no want which Thy love and Thy pres does not fully meet. In Thee, and in Thee o does the soul find perfect safety and contentmen

"Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak—but thou art mighty;
Hold me with thy powerful hand:
Bread of heaven,
Feed me till I want no more.

"Open now the crystal fountain,
Whence the healing waters flow;
Let the fiery, cloudy pillar,
Lead me all my journey through:
Strong Deliverer,
Be thou still my strength and shield.

"When I tread the verge of Jordan,
Bid my anxious fears subside;
Bear me through the swelling current;
Land me safe on Canaan's side:
Songs of praises
I will ever give to thee."

Eighteenth.

Morning. Ps. cix. 21.

Evening. John vi. 48.

AGAIN I come to Thee, that I may receive of the bread of life, to the strength and nourishment of my soul. Each day do I need a fresh supply. As none could lay in store manna for the morrow, so must we daily draw from the storehouse of Thy grace and mercy. Thus would I, morning and evening, look to Thee for all that my soul requires.

And when the way grows weary, and, discouraged, ignorant, and uncertain, I know not whither to turn; when evil passions beset and overpower me, O then, wilt Thou, Merciful Savior, be the stay of my soul, and let me feel Thy leading, guiding Hand? To whom else should I go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.

Associate, hast thou still thine only trust, and hope, and portion, in the blessed Jesus? Is He daily to thy soul the bread and water of life? Dost thou find in Him all that thy longing heart desires? Is He still as precious as in those pleasant days long past?

O Holy One, while we meet at this evening prayer, graciously stretch forth Thy hand of favor to strengthen and encourage us. Especially remember Thou the loved and absent.

Nineteenth.

Morning. Ps. cx. Evening. John vii. 1–24.

"If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine."

Very different indeed from this, is the practice of the world, too often of myself, and too often of many Christians. We are here taught that the *first of all duties* is, to do the will of God. Yet, simple as it is, we too commonly set it aside. The worldling is ready to take up his cross and follow Jesus, when he has become converted; Christians will labor zealously when their hearts have received a blessing, or when the Spirit moves them to it. We excuse ourselves from duty because our hearts are cold. How ready are we to flatter ourselves that God discharges us from the obligation, because "we don't feel" like meeting it!

Not thus the teaching of the Master. Neither want of conversion, of feeling, of admonition, of call, or of the Spirit's influence, can be pleaded in extenuation of failing to render immediate and unfailing obedience. We are to do His will *now and always*. Let us take this to our hearts as our perpetual and perfect rule, *To do His will always and without delay*.

Twentieth.

Morning. Ps. cxi. Evening. John vii. 25.

ALMIGHTY AND MERCIFUL LORD, I praise Thee for the mercies of the past day, and I desire to commend myself to thy watchful providence during the silent hours of this night. O Thou Shepherd of Israel! who never slumberest nor sleepest, watch over me as one of thy flock; embrace, with the arms of thy mercy, and bring into thy fold, all my friends and relations, and brethren of mankind, that so, at last, there may be one fold under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ. O Lord, pardon the sins of this day, as well as the sins of my past life, for the sake of Him whom thou ladest with the iniquity of us all. May I be daily renewed in the spirit of my mind, by the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit. May I be enabled to set thee, O Lord, before mine eyes; trusting in thy gracious promises, and living in humble dependence upon thee. May I receive the blessings of the Father's love, through faith in the finished salvation of the Son. Hear me, O Lord, for thy mercy is great; and accept me through Jesus Christ, my strength and my Redeemer.

PRIVATE DEVOTION.

Twenty-first.

Morning. Ps. cxii. Evening. John viii. 1–30.

How has this day been spent? Have I sought truly and earnestly to walk in Him who is the Light of the world? Have I followed in His precepts, and has my love for Him been proved by my keeping His commandments? Or have I been absorbed in worldly thoughts, and led by my own unchastened and unsanctified desires, and sought the light of my own darkened understanding?

God of all light and knowledge, purity, and excellence, shine in upon my heart, that I may now be permitted to see what are its ruling elements, motives, and purposes. Do Thou so soften it that, becoming impressed with its necessities, it may trust its all in Thee for wisdom and purification.

"O my God, wash me from all my filthiness in the spirit as well as in the flesh; for though in Christ there be no condemnation, and though He said 'Neither do I condemn thee,' He also said, 'Go and sin no more.' Let me mourn over the infirmities of others, and restore them when I can in the spirit of meekness—considering myself lest I also be tempted; and do Thou, O Holy One, ever restore and keep me."

Twenty-Second.

Morning. Ps. cxiii. Evening. John viii. 31.

Sin, ignorance, and evil, coil around us their chains and fetters, and lead us captive even while we are boasting of our freedom. Too late do we find their bonds too strong, and our captivity without hope. We long for the good, but attain only to the evil. We resolve to follow after virtue, but our feet tread the ways of vice. Summoning every noble faculty and purpose, we determine to escape from the paths of darkness to the highways of holiness, but only to find our strength paralyzed and our eyes blinded.

O Savior blessed for evermore, who only canst break our bonds, and enlighten our eyes—who only canst lead us from the regions of death into the land of life, and light, and truth, I have no trust, nor hope, nor redemption, but in Thee. O stretch forth Thine arm of strength, and save. Would that my lips and heart could bring unto Thee, to whom I owe my all, some evening sacrifice more worthy and more becoming. All that I have, and all that I am, will I, and do I now cheerfully and gratefully bring and lay upon the altar. Jesus, my kind Benefactor, all is Thine, yet O, how unworthy!

Twenty-Third.

Morning. Ps. cxiv.

Evening. John ix. 1-23.

"OPEN thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

Ignorant by nature, our sinful lives have added to our moral and mental blindness, until we are wholly unable to discern spiritual things. It is only when Thou dost, in Thy great compassion, anoint our eyes, that we can regain a true perception of ourselves, and Thee, and the Way of Life. May our whole bodies be full of light!

O Thou who art the fullness of Divine Beneficence, wilt Thou this evening touch all our eyes that we may see aright the page of Wisdom, and touch our hearts that we may feel the things of the Spirit?

Now, O merciful Savior, cover with the veil of charity and forgiveness the errors of this day. Let them come no more into remembrance before Thee, for Thou hast made atonement. May our hearts be filled with a fitting penitence and humility, in view of our constant errors. Remember Thou all the loved, and all that remember me in prayer. O may we all be one in heart and spirit, and one in Thee. Be as a wall of fire round about us, that we may not be spoil to them that seek our souls.

Twenty-Fourth.

Morning. Ps. cxv.

Evening. John ix. 24.

How comforting to our hearts would it be, if we could see Jesus, and talk with Him as did this recovered blind man—if we could hear his lips pronounce these blessed words of truth and consolation, "I am come into this world that they which see not, might see."

Shall we, my long tried and faithful Friend, shall we be permitted in a few years, perhaps months or days, to see Jesus and talk with Him as with a friend—a brother—as we have been wont to talk with each other? O glorious, blessed prospect—hope that lifts us up to heaven even while we dwell on earth! It is enough—the soul can ask no higher joy, can comprehend no greater dignity or excellence within its wishes. It is too great to ask, too rich to be enjoyed, too high to attempt, but that Thy love has bestowed it as a Father's gift, with a Father's blessing. Let me thank Thee; let me adore Thee. Let me lift up my voice with praise, with a song and with the melody of a heart filled with joy, for Thou art good; Thy goodness is unsearchable. O why am I so slow to love Thee! How ungrateful I am!

Twenty-Fifth.

Morning. Ps. cxvi., cxvii. Evening. John x. 1–21.

"I AM the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

The Lord my pasture shall prepare,
And feed me with a shepherd's care;
His presence shall my wants supply,
And guard me with a watchful eye:
My noon-day walks he shall attend,
And all my midnight hours defend.

When in the sultry glebe I faint,
Or on the thirsty mountain pant,
To fertile vales and dewy meads,
My weary, wand'ring steps he leads,
Where peaceful rivers, soft and slow,
Amid the verdant landscape flow.

Though in a bare and rugged way,
Through devious, lonely wilds I stray,
Thy bounty shall my pains beguile;
The barren wilderness shall smile,
With sudden greens and herbage crown'd,
And streams shall murmur all around.

Though in the paths of death I tread,
With gloomy horrors overspread,
My steadfast heart shall fear no ill,
For thou, O Lord, art with me still:
Thy friendly crook shall give me aid,
And guide me through the dreadful shade.

ADDISON.

Twenty-Sixth.

Morning. Pa. cxviii. 1-17. Evening. John x. 22.

O THOU SHEPHERD and Bishop of my soul, who hast led me hitherto, who hast been my Preserver and constant Guide, for all Thy tender care and unceasing goodness, for Thy forgiving grace and sparing mercies, I would now bring an evening offering of praise and thanksgiving. When, in my ignorance, I have not known the path, Thou hast instructed me; and when faint and weary, Thou hast helped me; when, in the perverseness of my heart, I have strayed from Thy fold, Thou hast brought me back again. Thus hast Thou dealt with me another day in kindness.

O Thou Good Shepherd, Thou that dost ever go before Thy sheep, Thou that dost know my weakness and my frailty, be pleased to hold and keep me, that I may never stray from Thee. I would ever hear and know Thy voice.

So dwell within me, so be my actuating, animating spirit, that it shall be my delight and joy to follow the voice of the Blessed Shepherd. Make me and my Associate so to follow Thy gentle voice, that we may be led to the heavenly Fold. Let us hear Thy voice in this evening's meditations.

Twenty-Seventh.

Morning. Ps. cxviii. 18.

Evening. John xi. 1-29.

"Now JESUS loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus."

Spotless Image of Heaven's fadeless glory, clad in mortal vesture that Thou mightest be the Sinless Pattern of human excellence, and gather round the weakness of humanity the halo of an origin and destiny divine; by the tears of sorrow Thou hast shed, by the words of tenderness Thou hast spoken, with what a dignity and sacredness hast Thou robed these deep emotions and affections of the human heart!

O mysterious, hallowed affection!—the spell that wreathes the virtues of the soul into fadeless garlands for the Land of Paradise—that melts the hearts of kindred spirits into one, and all to Thine—the light that gilds the dark, cheerless path of life with joy, that robes with unapproachable effulgence the hills and vales of the world to come,—with thy magic power, binding my heart to all the pure and lovely ones of earth, to everything that hath the impress of the hand Divine, and doth breathe its spirit, draw me thus to Jesus, to Heaven, and to Him who is LOVE.

Twenty-Eighth.

Morning. Ps. cxix. A. B. Evening. John xi. 30.

"SHE goeth unto the grave to weep there."

O stricken Child of Mortality! when the angel of sorrow, folding its wings, shall brood in silence and terror on the hearth of thine own happy home, and thou with muffled step goest up to the silent chamber of grief, as thou standest beside the lifeless loved, and with bitter, burning tears and choking sobs, lookest to say, Farewell, farewell forever, my beautiful, my own;—as thou standest with the long train of the mournful, on the edge of the deep, hollow, final cradle, taking thy last look of all that remains of thy heart's idol, as in thy wild emotions thou feelest to say, "All my heart is buried with thee," then, O weeping One, mayest thou remember that thus was thy Savior touched with sorrow, and thus did He weep for the loved. And when, at thy desolate home, every silent apartment shall bring the scalding tear to thy cheek, and tell thee thou art alone; and every footstep echo to thy heart, Gone, gone forever, O then may angels of mercy bring to thy sorrowing heart the words of thy Savior, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live again."

Twenty-Ninth.

Morning. Ps. cxix. G. D.

Evening. John xii. 1-26.

EVER-MERCIFUL FATHER, whose watch-care is never withdrawn from Thy children, to whom the darkness shineth as the day; whatsoever I have been enabled to accomplish this day, and whatsoever I have sought to do for Thee, wilt Thou, for the sake of Christ, accept and bless? But, O God of goodness and compassion, wherein I have been negligent and come short of duty, for Jesus' sake, forgive. Thy goodness, and His all-worthy Name, are my only hope and confidence.

"Savior, breathe an evening blessing,
Ere repose our spirits seal;
Sin and want we come confessing;
Thou canst save and thou canst heal.

Though destruction walk around us,
Though the arrows past us fly,
Angel guards from thee surround us;
We are safe, if thou art nigh.

Though the night be dark and dreary,
Darkness cannot hide from thee;
Thou art He who, never weary,
Watchest where thy people be.

Should swift death this night o'ertake us,
And command us to the tomb,
May the morn in heaven awake us,
Clad in bright, eternal bloom."

Thirtieth.

Morning. Evening.
Ps. cxix. H. V. John xii. 27.

Do I love the praise of men more than the praise of God? Have I sought, in all that this fading day will report to heaven, to honor Him whose approval is more to me than all the world beside? Does not present favor and applause, present ridicule and censure, because it is present, and seen, and felt, often influence me far more than the approbation of my Heavenly Father, because it is distant, and so much less vividly apprehended?

Is it not a serious fault with me to postpone, to avoid, and evade, if possible, unpleasant duties, in the vague hope that, by some means, I shall be excused? Do not my sensitiveness to the opinions of others, and my disinclinations, often exercise a greater power over me than the direct commandments of my Father in heaven? What shall it profit me to gain the whole world and lose my own soul?

Thou who dost see the future as well as the present, wilt Thou so abide within, and control my judgment and will, that I may never weigh my purposes against Thine — the temporal against the eternal! May Thy praise alone ever draw all my heart and soul!

Thirty-First.

Morning. Ps. cxix. G. C.

Evening. John xiii. 1-20.

GOD OF ALL GOODNESS, as the month thus passes away, I would come to Thee, and, in contrition and humility, earnestly implore that all its wrongs and transgressions may not be remembered against me in the day of the great Judgment. I trust I have sought to follow in the footsteps of my Savior, though it may be imperfectly, and with many wanderings; and, for His sake, O Father, pity, spare, and preserve me and my fellow Pilgrim, and keep us, that in all our journey of life, we may never stray from the narrow Way.

Blessed Savior, this evening, may we feel anew the washing of regeneration!

"Forever here my rest shall be,
Close to thy bleeding side;
This all my hope, and all my plea,—
For me the Savior died.

"My dying Savior, and my God,
Fountain for guilt and sin,
Sprinkle me ever with thy blood,
And cleanse and keep me clean.

"Wash me, and make me thus thine own;
Wash me, and mine thou art;
Wash me, but not my feet alone,—
My hands, my head, my heart."

JUNE.

First.

Morning. Ps. cxix. T. J.

Evening. John xiii. 21.

JUNE! sweet, joyous, and beautiful, that dost robe the earth in its richest and most gorgeous garniture, Hail, month of beauty! month of blessings! My heart bids thee welcome! Thou dost image forth most perfectly that spirit-world, where never-failing Spring abides, and where the fields are forever dressed in living green — the final Home of the blessed.

For thy birds and flowers, thy cooling zephyrs and laughing brooks, thy lovely vales and deep, dark, and solemn forests—for thy cloudless summer days, teaching of an all-pervading love — for thy softened, dewy evening hours, wooing us up to hea-

ven — for thyself, matchless queen of all the year, my soul doth thank and bless the bounteous Giver, thy Father and mine.

Soul, look out upon this flood of beauty, scattered with such munificence! Drink in its spirit! love and enjoy it, and let it fill thee! 'Tis the smile of thy Creator—'tis His smile of blessing, love, and favor. 'Tis His smile of revelation, ever saying to thy spirit, "Neither have entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for those that love Him."

> "O what a glory doth this world put on
> For him who, with a fervent heart, goes forth
> Under the bright and glorious sky, and looks
> On duties well performed, and days well spent!"

Does she not beseem the fitting workmanship of Him who gave as His commandment, "That ye love one another as I have loved you"?

O Maker of the beautiful and good, in the bud and bloom of life, wilt Thou dress the garden of our hearts, that, in the sere and yellow leaf, golden fruit may crown life's finished labor, and scatter many seeds within those sunny vales of Paradise, where youth and beauty bloom in endless Spring, and where the sinless soul may forever repose in the bower of Love?

Second.

Morning. Ps. cxix. C. L. Evening. John xiv.

WHAT a contrast is observable in some professors, between the earnestness of their prayers and the carelessness of their lives! They seem to imagine that the whole Christian warfare is a vocation of the closet. There, and there alone, they seek to nurture their Christian virtues, to mortify the deeds of the flesh, and to offer themselves a living sacrifice to God.

In the closet only they do the works of Him that hath called them. They pray for grace to subdue the evil propensities which they voluntarily indulge throughout the rest of the day. They cherish pride, and pray for humility. They eagerly court the applause of the world, and make it the main element of their happiness, and pray for heavenly affections. They indulge in sinful tempers and passions, and pray, perhaps, with strong cries and tears, to be made meek, and childlike, and patient. They disjoin their praying and their acting altogether—they give their devotions to God and the rest of their time to the world. There lies the great secret of barren devotions and unanswered prayers. What we lack is holy living. OLIN.

Third.

Morning. Ps. cxix. M. N.

Evening. John xv.

As I read this portion of Divine Word, I desire to become more fully impressed with the sublimity and excellence of its teachings. I would seek to comprehend that, here the nature of that Infinite One who has made us, and that Glorious One who has redeemed us, is most fully set forth. I would strive to draw from these words their inner, hidden meaning,—I would look beyond the letter, and seek to discern the spirit,—ever remembering that the spirit is discerned by the heart, not the mind; by investigation less than by prayer.

Fill my heart, O Source of all holy thoughts, with an all-absorbing love for Thee and Thy truth, and then shall I be able to perceive the spiritual nature of Thy teachings. Thou, who art love, dost most truthfully reveal Thyself to us when we most truthfully love Thee. May I, therefore, take these truths cordially, thankfully, and affectionately into my heart, that they may be to my soul meat indeed and drink indeed! Especially wilt Thou aid me, O Holy Spirit, to an understanding of these last, most blessed, and divine teachings of my departing Savior.

Fourth.

Morning. Ps. cxix. S. A.

Evening. John xvi.

WHAT tenderness, what compassion, and sympathy flow from every expression of these teachings of Jesus! Soul, do thou often repair to this Last Supper, and listen to these Divine words as they fall from lips that shall open to us in wisdom, no more. And as thou dost hear Him say, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name he will do it," be thou filled with a higher sense of the honor to which thou hast been exalted in His name; and, in the assurance that the Father himself loveth thee, be encouraged and strengthened in thy weakness, that Heaven, although so high and holy, may yet be attained; for the Father will aid those He loves.

And when in the world we have tribulation, may we hear Jesus saying, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." May we be of good cheer, in the assurance that, as He has overcome the world, so will He be our Aid, our Strength, in all time of trial, and enable us to come off more than conquerors through Him who hath loved us.

O my Divine Strength, enable me this evening to overcome in my heart "the world, the flesh, and the devil."

Fifth.

Morning. Ps. cxix. P. T.

Evening. John xvii.

BELOVED CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATES! Let us meditate upon this last prayer of our Redeemer in our behalf, with the deepest, sincerest thankfulness and gratitude; and let us seek to draw wisdom from its sublime and consoling truths.

Let us, when beset with temptations, remember that Christ prayed, not that we should be taken out of the world, but that we might be kept from its evil. Let us, then, know and feel that the place Providence assigns us is best fitted to prepare us for life's great end—that we may be purified and fitted for His glory in heaven.

O Fellow Christian, canst thou read this prayer that He offered for thee, that thou mightest be one in Him, that we all might be one in each other, and be unthankful? What love for us, and what love would He have subsist between us! And then the crowning evidence of His affection for us, in the desire that where He was there might we be with Him! O, can we ask for more! My dear, dear Savior, this evening, now at this hour, would I give Thee all the affection my soul is capable of. I would make my whole being Thine.

Sixth.

Morning. Pa. cxix. K. R.

Evening. John xviii. 1-18.

PARENT OF ALL MERCIES! whatever of evil and adversity may encompass us, whatever of disappointment and sorrow may befall us, when our hearts become faint and spiritless in the contests with evil, may we then turn to the Savior, and, from His divine example, learn of meekness, of patience, and resignation! May we ever be able with Him to say, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" May we remember that there is no cup of life, how bitter soever it may be, which our Father hath not mixed!

And as Jesus suffered willingly that He might bless others, so may we feel willing to suffer and endure, that we may be of benefit to sinful, fallen man. May we never ask, What will it benefit *me?* —What shall *I* gain by this or that effort? Rather may we imitate Christ, who left His throne of glory that He might suffer for us.

Associate, art thou unwilling to leave all, to endure all, if thou mayest aid in thy Master's work? O beloved Fellow Pilgrim, let us seek to follow in the footsteps of Him who alone has led the way to glory.

Seventh.

Morning. Ps. cxix. S. T.

Evening. John xviii. 19.

ANOTHER day has fled, and how do all its actions and thoughts appear to me in retrospect? Is there aught I would recall, aught I would not have done, aught I would not have said? Has no person ruffled the calmness of my spirit, no unkindness embittered my words, no distrust disturbed my communings with my Savior? Does the day report of me aught done for my Master? Have I done anything—even one little thing? Have I been able to ascend up to His holy dwelling-place, and there to hold sweet converse with Him in my heart? Have I been as sincerely and truly His as I resolved yesterday I would be?

I am not satisfied with my present devotion to God. As I read how Jesus labored, suffered, and died, that He might bless others, I am utterly displeased with my own listlessness and indifference, my want of energy and devotion. My desire is, to be made of benefit to those around me—to live to some good purpose. Aid me, O indulgent Father, in discovering what I may do, what I ought to do; and then may I be able to consecrate myself to its accomplishment!

Eighth.

Morning. Ps. cxx., cxxi.

Evening. John xix. 1-18.

GIVE me, O Lord, to be impressed aright by this recital of the sufferings of my Savior. May I therein see the greatness of His love, and feel its constraining influence, so that I may love Him back again—yea, and live to Him who died for me! And O may the trifling injuries which I sustain be borne with the meekness and charity which shine so conspicuously in the whole deportment of Him who was led as a lamb to the slaughter! More especially, let me know what it is to take up my cross daily, and, bearing it as He did, learn in all things to follow Him. Above all, let me ever keep in memory this first principle of the oracles of God—that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; and let the graces of faith, and hope, and love, be upheld within by the contemplation of that awful yet blessed crisis.

O may my sins be washed out in the blood of the Lamb, and also may the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit, be brought to bear upon me!

CHALMERS.

Ninth.

Morning. Ps. cxxii., cxxiii.

Evening. John xix. 19.

"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished, and he bowed his head and gave up the ghost."

May this astonishing work of grace and compassion draw my heart in confidence and love toward Him who thus gave Himself a ransom for us! May I here be taught that such mercy can never refuse the vilest that desires to return to his Father's house! Here may I see the only ground of acceptance with an offended and just God! Here may I be able to see that henceforth His anger is turned away, and that whosoever will may come and be made partakers of His Great Atonement.

"From the cross uplifted high,
Where the Savior deigns to die,
What melodious sounds we hear
Bursting on the ravished ear!—
Love's redeeming work is done—
Come and welcome, sinner, come!

"Sprinkled now with blood the throne—
Why beneath thy burdens groan?
On his pierced body laid,
Justice owns the ransom paid;
Bow the knee—embrace the Son—
Come and welcome, sinner, come!"

Tenth.

Morning. Ps. cxxiv., cxxv. Evening. John xx.

THY triumph, Victorious Savior, is the triumph of mankind. Thou hast conquered death once for us all. Thou hast brought life and immortality to light; and in Thy resurrection, hast assured us of Thine omnipotence, and given us a surety that Thou art Lord over all; and in that He was raised for our justification, not only that He is able, but willing to save to the uttermost.

May this glorious fact and doctrine of the resurrection, work within my heart its purifying and ennobling designs. May it enable me to realize more fully than I am wont, that I am to live after this life. May I be able in its contemplation to apprehend more plainly the fact and worth of an immortal existence. May I be led to more strenuous efforts for such a life and heart as shall permit me to hope for a participation in the first resurrection. To this end, O God of all protection, may Thy restraining grace ever be around me to keep me from evil; and a more determined resolution take possession of my heart, to follow, in my daily walk and conversation, in the steps of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life.

Eleventh.

Morning. Ps. cxxvi., cxxvii. Evening. John xxi.

CAN we, Associates, say with Peter, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee"? Have we that sincerity and affection within, which admits no doubt, no hesitation, even to the inspection of the Savior? Or have we, what is too frequently the case with Christians, but a mere wish to escape the punishments of our sins,—a kind of half desire to obey the positive commandments of God, yet a longing all the while for the sinful pleasures of the world—a purpose merely to avoid the perils and punishments of violated law, yet no wish to be Christ's in the inner being?

May we often examine our hearts with the utmost diligence and circumspection, lest we be contenting ourselves with a name to live while we are dead—with a form of sound doctrine while the spirit is wanting. Let us daily strive so to live that we may be prepared to say at all times, "Lord, *thou knowest* that I love thee." May we leave this in no uncertainty. May we rest not day nor night till we feel an assurance that there is within us an abiding, absorbing love, controlling all our thoughts and actions to the will of Jesus.

Twelfth.

Morning. Ps. cxxviii., cxxix.

Evening. Acts i.

THOUGH THOU hast gone from us, Blessed Redeemer, Thou hast left us the promise of Thy coming again, and of Thy presence and assistance to the end of life's journey. Grant unto me that spiritual sensibility by which I may be able to apprehend Thy presence continually. Bestow upon me that constantly new heart which can feel the movings of Thy gentle Spirit, leading me nearer to Thee and holiness. I desire such a heart and such a life, as will enable me to attain to that faith which lays hold on the deep and hidden things of God. I would rise above the seen and temporal, to the unseen and eternal.

Be pleased, O Thou who art a Spirit, to lead me into these spirit ways and thoughts. At this hour of worship, may my soul feel that it has communion with its Divine Creator. May not my prayer be a mere word-service, but a rendering up of the soul in a becoming manner to its Great Disposer. Visit us all at this hour with rich and heartfelt evidences of forgiveness, and with an unwonted access to the throne of grace.

"O for a closer walk with God!"

Thirteenth.

Morning. Ps. cxxx., cxxxi.

Evening. Acts ii. 1-21.

CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATES, as we come to the mercy-seat, may we, with one mind and one heart, seek a Pentecostal season. O Thou risen and glorified Redeemer, who hast promised the Comforter to Thy children, in the fullness of Thy grace and mercy, pour out upon us now, at this our hour of evening prayer, a large measure of Thy Holy Spirit. May it enter our hearts as a refiner's fire, purifying and consuming all sinful passions and emotions, all worldly desires, the lusts of the flesh and of the eye, the pride of life, the insubordination of will, that henceforth, with hearts renewed in righteousness, we may live holier lives.

Let us, Associate, on this evening, pray especially for each other, that the Holy Ghost may ever attend us—that we may never so depart from God that His Spirit shall leave us. O may the Comforter be to us all, our evening consolation and our morning strength! May He attend us in our daily toil and pastime—in our social gatherings and our hours of retirement and meditation, ever drawing our hearts up to heaven, and fitting us for its glory and companionship.

Fourth.

Morning. Ps. cxix. S. A.

Evening. John xvi.

WHAT tenderness, what compassion, and sympathy flow from every expression of these teachings of Jesus! Soul, do thou often repair to this Last Supper, and listen to these Divine words as they fall from lips that shall open to us in wisdom, no more. And as thou dost hear Him say, "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name he will do it," be thou filled with a higher sense of the honor to which thou hast been exalted in His name; and, in the assurance that the Father himself loveth thee, be encouraged and strengthened in thy weakness, that Heaven, although so high and holy, may yet be attained; for the Father will aid those He loves.

And when in the world we have tribulation, may we hear Jesus saying, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." May we be of good cheer, in the assurance that, as He has overcome the world, so will He be our Aid, our Strength, in all time of trial, and enable us to come off more than conquerors through Him who hath loved us.

O my Divine Strength, enable me this evening to overcome in my heart "the world, the flesh, and the devil."

Fifteenth.

Morning. Ps. cxxxiii., cxxxiv. Evening. Acts iii.

O FOR a deeper, heartfelt consciousness of His immediate presence and influence upon my heart; for a consciousness that my ways are upright, and my heart pure in His sight! I long for that faith which lays firm hold upon and brings to actual realization and enjoyment, things spiritual and eternal; which gives us to feel that each day and hour teems with immortal interests.

Aware that this present life is the key-note to which all the harmonies of the soul must forever be attuned, I would be more constantly impressed with the practical nature of this great truth. I would feel that each day, in its results, is an eternity of blessing or of loss. At each hour of evening prayer, I would appreciate the great fact that another of heaven's golden opportunities to gather jewels for eternity, is fled forever. O for a more living, abiding, controlling conviction that life is not for now but for the hereafter. May each day be a day for God and Heaven!

Reign thou within me, O God of goodness, and let no word, or thought, or act be mine, which bears not with it Thy Paternal blessing.

Sixteenth.

Morning. Ps. cxxxv.

Evening. Acts iv. 1-20.

CAN it be that I should ever hearken unto man rather than God? And yet how prone is my heart to seek its own wisdom, the wisdom of the world, everything, before that wisdom which cometh down from heaven. How slow, and often how reluctant am I, to make Jesus my Counsellor! So long as prosperity attends all our purposes and plans, how little do we feel that we are dependent upon a higher Power! but when our own transgressions have brought calamities upon us as a whirlwind, how quickly do we flee to Thee, and how urgently supplicate Thy aid and protection!

O Source of all wisdom, who can lead me as Thou? Who can preserve me as Thou canst? Thou who hast given Thy life for me, who will so watch over and protect as Thou wilt? Why should I fear if Thou art with me? Why should I turn away from Thee to follow my own sinful heart, my own foolish understanding?

O restore me to a higher wisdom and a holier life! This evening, grant me the influence of that blessed Spirit which shall make me "to will and to do of Thy good pleasure."

Seventeenth.

Morning. Ps. cxxxvi. Evening. Acts iv. 21.

ASSOCIATE, doth not this glorious summer-time lift up thy heart and soul to heaven? Dost thou not feel, when walking through the fields and forests, 'God is here?' And does not all this beauty and excellence awaken longings for the better land? How often, as I go forth at morning or at close of day to look upon and love this beautiful, this glorious world, does my heart long for thy companionship, that we, together, might commune of God, of heaven, and of the matchless drapery He has thrown around His terrestrial works. I look upon and see them, but they touch not the deeper fountains of the soul as when *thou* art with me, gilding all with thy pure and chastened thought. The soul but half enjoys alone. It is only when hand in hand with kindred spirits,—when images of beauty are seen reflected from eyes that sparkle with affection,—when emotions are felt in the throbbings of a sympathizing heart,—it is only then that the soul attains to its perfection of happiness. This will Heaven offer to us forever. There, in friendly converse with the great, the good, and the holy, may we learn ceaselessly of the Creator and His works.

Eighteenth.

Morning. Pa. cxxxvii. Evening. Acts v. 1-16.

THE question, What ought I to give of my substance to the cause of my Master, is much less frequently asked than, What are others giving? I would be actuated by the feeling that, of myself, I have nothing—that my property, my comforts, and my friends, all are the gifts of a beneficent Father. I would hold them not as my own, but His, feeling that when He needs them, I have no claim upon them, nor would I wish to have. I would cheerfully render them back to Him.

He has constituted me the judge of what His cause needs, and what I need. It is proper for me therefore to ask always, What can I give, What ought I to give? Let me never ask or think, What is expected of me? What have others given? How little will answer the purpose? Be this my rule: All is God's; I may appropriate to my own uses all that is needed, the rest is His emphatically. Heavenly Father, may a selfish spirit never find a moment's lodgment in my heart! May it ever be my highest joy, to return to Thee all I can! Bless Thou my little offering, and give me health and strength, that I may be able to bestow more abundantly!

Nineteenth.

Morning. Ps. cxxxviii.

Evening. Acts v. 17.

BLESSED SAVIOR, I devolve my every care on Thee. Thou art noting now on the throne the pangs and sorrows of every burdened heart. All other love is imperfect. May my affections be consecrated to Thee. May it be my joy to serve Thee—my privilege to follow Thee, and, if need be, to suffer with Thee. May every cross lose its bitterness by having Thee at my side. May I feel that nothing but absence from Thee can create a real blank in my heart. Thy presence takes the sting from all afflictions, and imparts security in the midst of all troubles.

Living or dying, may I be Thine. May I breathe the atmosphere of heaven. May God himself be so enthroned in my affections that I may be enabled to say in comparison with Him, of all the world can give, There is none upon the earth that I desire besides Thee. Heavenly Father, I leave all that belong to me to Thee. "Undertake Thou for them." Bless them, and make them blessings. Hide them under the shadow of Thy wings until earth's calamities be overpast. Hear this my evening supplication, and when Thou hearest forgive.

MORNING WATCHES.

Twentieth.

Morning. Ps. cxxxix. 1–18. Evening. Acts vi.

GOD OF INFINITE GOODNESS, infinite mercy and compassion, I bless Thy Name for the manifold favors of another happy day. I thank Thee for this beautiful world, for this conscious, sentient existence which Thou hast given me. I thank Thee that Thou hast made me to look out upon Thy works and love them; for the blessed light that my eyes drink in, with its myriad beauties of form and tint, and for the enjoyments of the untold multitude of earth's mingled harmonies—the ceaseless chorus of a world of life and happiness. I thank Thee for that health and strength which permits me to walk forth, and see and enjoy what Thou hast made.

And, O Parent of all blessings, what shall I render to Thee, for those kind and loving hearts Thou hast given me—those precious friends whose smile is a perpetual sunlight, whose affection the purest gem in the crown of earthly enjoyments? I receive them all as the token of Thy love, and would render Thee the thankful homage of a life of obedience and gratitude. O pour upon them the rich blessing of Thy favor and forgiveness, and bring us all at last to heaven and Thyself.

Twenty-first.

Morning. Ps. cxxxix. 14.

Evening. Acts vii. 1–19.

NOTHING is too vast for Thee to comprehend—nothing too minute to escape Thy notice. Alike dost Thou behold nations and individuals. Thou dost ever reward righteousness, and punish iniquity. Though Thou dost bear long, yet shall not wickedness go unrebuked, nor uprightness unblest.

As I cast my eyes back upon the long line of ages, may I behold there Thy manifest hand, and draw wisdom. Thou dost rule among the nations of the earth as in the armies of heaven, following with every favor and blessing those that love and serve Thee, and bringing to naught the counsel of the ungodly.

May I hence learn to put all my trust in a faithful and persistent obedience to Thy commandments. May I never halt between two opinions—never hesitate whether I shall serve my God; but in every circumstance, especially in trials and discouragements, when dangers seem to lower portentously, may I then have strength to follow Thy precepts! O may I never turn away from Him whose favor is better than life, and whose hands are filled with benefits!

Twenty-Second.

Morning. Ps. cxl. Evening. Acts vii. 30–40.

As evening bids me rest again from toil, and the closing day bears my thoughts on to the life's last hours, I would look up to the star-bestudded firmament, and learn what swift-fleeting shadows we are.

Arcturus and the Pleiades shone down with the same silvery light upon Paradise and Gethsemane, as now upon this lovely landscape. The first-created pair, in their spotlessness, looked up and caught, with hearts of joy, their first glittering beams. Abraham and Moses, and the untold generations of the past, all beheld, as I now behold, these sparkling gems of night, and watched their changeless beauty. But where are all the eyes that have watched them in their silent vigils, and all the hearts that were gladdened by their brightness? At rest, and forever! Silently sleeping where evening comes not, and the stars never shine. So shall I rest, and thou, my Associate, decayed and forgotten by all, while other eyes shall look upward, and other hearts be made glad. Then, O God of our spirits, may we, crowned with glory immortal, shine forth as stars to the praise of Him whose presence and glory is the perpetual sunlight of heaven.

Twenty-Third.

Morning. Ps. cxli. Evening. Acts vii. 41.

O THOU, who art the Creator and Redeemer of my soul, when I come at last to render up my being, may I, like Stephen, fall asleep commending my spirit to Jesus. May my life be such an unremitted effort to walk humbly and acceptably before Thee, my God, that I may feel Thou dost permit me to rest in confidence upon Thy mercy and grace. Daily may I remember that only an upright life can give a peaceful death.

"How blest the righteous when he dies!
When sinks a weary soul to rest,
How mildly beam the closing eyes!
How gently heaves th' expiring breast!

"So fades a summer cloud away;
So sinks the gale when storms are o'er;
So gently shuts the eye of day;
So dies a wave along the shore.

"A holy quiet reigns around,—
A calm which life nor death destroys;
And naught disturbs that peace profound
Which his unfettered soul enjoys.

"Life's labor done, as sinks the clay,—
Light from its load the spirit flies,
While heaven and earth combine to say,—
How blest the righteous when he dies."

Twenty-Fourth.

Morning. Ps. cxlii.

Evening. Acts viii. 1-24.

GOD OF EXCELLENCE, God of majesty and all glory, Being in whom centres all that is just, and good, and holy, my heart is filled with Thy praise. My lips would fain offer to Thee some song befitting Thy greatness and goodness. To what unspeakable honor and glory dost Thou invite Thy children!

When I look upon the earth wrapped in such magnificence, the heavens, the resplendent image of the Infinite and Glorious, and remember that all this is but a feeble shadow of the new heaven and new earth—when I consider the immortality of the soul, and its longings for an abode in heaven—and when I look within and realize the vileness of my nature, its utter unfitness for the good and pure, its hatred of holiness, and consider that Thou hast washed and cleansed me, Thou hast redeemed me and made me an heir of all this unimagined glory and happiness, my heart is overborne with gratitude, and my lips are silent with what they cannot utter. But when I am gathered home, O may the happiness be mine to join the blood-washed, in that new song to Thy praise, Thou All-glorious, which none but the Redeemed may sing.

Twenty-Fifth.

Morning. Ps. cxliii. Evening. Acts viii. 26.

GREAT AND GLORIOUS BEING who hast made us and all that we have, or enjoy, or hope to be, whose are all things, ere I close the labors of the day, my soul would account itself to Thee. I come confessing, that in many things, I have offended! I have not done this day all that I would! My weakness, my feebleness, my want of moral courage, ever press upon and restrain me.

If I have purposely departed from Thy ways, O God, make me ashamed and heartily sorry for such transgressions; and if, through carelessness or inadvertency, I have stepped aside, from whatever cause, or whereinsoever I have done wrong, O Compassionate Redeemer, cause me to repent and forsake the evil. Cleanse Thou my heart from all unrighteousness, that, henceforth, I may walk in the ways of wisdom and obedience.

I commend my soul and body to Thee, O Lord! Watch over me in all my ways. Preserve my life and health, and keep me from sin. Be Thou near to all my friends. Lead them in the ways of peace and blessing. Keep us all, Heavenly Father, Thine in life, Thine in death, and Thine in heaven.

Twenty-Sixth.

Morning. Ps. cxliv. Evening. Acts ix. 1-22.

LET Thy Gospel go forth, O Thou who art to be King over all the earth! Thy Word "is like as a fire, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces." Who shall contend with Thee, or who resist Thy Spirit? Arise, O Lord, and let Thy glory shine unto the ends of the earth! Hasten on the day of Thy righteousness! Thou hast taught us Thou art no respecter of persons—that all may receive alike of Thy favor; and that Thy kingdom shall come throughout the world. O hasten on this glorious day when all shall know the Lord, when Thou shalt reign in all our hearts! We will rejoice and be glad in Thee, for though Zion hath long mourned in sackcloth and ashes, yet shall the day of her redemption surely come.

O let it come in my heart, that Christ may be its only Lord and King—cast out every evil, and let the glorious reign of righteousness be completed there! May my heart be a kingdom of the Lord's! Over me, and my fellow Pilgrim, wilt Thou, Blessed Prince of Peace, ever hold the sceptre of Thy power and grace. Come within our hearts, and there enthrone Thyself at this evening prayer.

Twenty-Seventh.

Morning. Ps. cxlv.

Evening. Acts ix. 23.

THY kingdom is an everlasting kingdom. Here our brightest joys are evanescent; only some earnests of the future joy are vouchsafed to us. A few flowers only gathered from that Paradise are given us; and these even, as in an uncongenial climate, wither while we look upon them. In this remote land, we hear but a few strains of the harmonies of the blessed, and these only for a little; but there, the joys shall be pure and permanent, the harmonies glorious. Here, joy enters into us; but there, we shall breathe an atmosphere fragrant with bliss, and enter an ocean of joy. There, there will be errands of beneficence of which we shall be never weary; embassies of love in which there can occur no disappointment; researches that will be never vain; and discoveries that shall never disappoint. There the changeable shall give place to the unchangeable; the precarious to that which is stable; and the beauty of the vision, and the evanescence of it that now is, to the splendor of a vision that shall not be dimmed or withdrawn forever.

CUMMING.

Twenty-Eighth.

Morning. Pa. cxlvi. Evening. Acts x. 1–23.

ALL-SEARCHING ONE, who knowest every thought, who seest every heart, look Thou upon me in Thy tenderness, and spurn me not from the mercy-seat; for, with all the errors and transgressions of my daily life, my heart yet longs for a deeper baptism. I ask for greater favors, promising greater obedience. I will strive to serve Thee in newness of heart and uprightness of life. It is not enough for me to live as I have done. Added days, added privileges, added mercies, call for a holier life and heart.

"I would be Thine; O take my heart,
And fill it with thy love;
Thy sacred image, Lord, impart,
And seal it from above.

I would be Thine; but while I strive
To give myself away,
I feel rebellion still alive,
And wander while I pray.

I would be Thine; but, Lord, I feel
Evil still lurks within:—
Do thou thy majesty reveal,
And overcome my sin.

I would be Thine; I would embrace
The Savior, and adore;
Inspire with faith, infuse thy grace,
And now my soul restore."

Twenty-Ninth.

Morning. Ps. cxlvii. 1-10. Evening. Acts x. 24.

"While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word."

In this oppressive season how frequently do we excuse ourselves from attendance on the means of grace! How often trust to others to support the ordinances of the Lord's House—how often make excuses for these duties, which would ill suffice us for the denial of a pleasure!

Associates, let us, with honest hearts and purpose, seek what is the will of the Master. Let us not be found faithless servants when He has not discharged us. Since Christians are so prone to forsake the place of prayer and worship, there is the more need we should be in our place. Let us not consult ease or pleasure, but ever say, How can I best sustain the honor of my Master's cause? It may require some self-denial, but, fellow pilgrims, have we sought to journey to heaven in the path of indolence, or of self-sacrifice? How great reason shall we have for thankfulness, if, through this short life, we be found at last to have faltered in no trial, and to have met every obligation, as a brave and faithful Christian soldier.

Thirtieth.

Morning. Ps. cxlvii. 11. Evening. Acts xi.

BRIGHT, beauteous June, farewell! Thou art gone forever, and naught is left but tender memories, locked in the warmest embrace of our hearts. In the beauty and glory of thy perpetual smile, we have read the continued lesson of the goodness and love of our Father in Heaven—thy flowers have taught us of purity—thy wild-wood songs, cheerfulness, peace, and content—thy cooling zephyrs, kindness, truth, and affection. But thou hast fled, and so will flee life's season of flowers—so pass away those that are dearest; some to meet us again, and some to return no more.

O cherished Friends of other days, whose images within my heart time touches not, and whose love burns undimmed on its altar, scattered to meet no more till in heaven, whither some already are gone, this shall be the day of thy memory. Let us pray for each other, that the God who watched us in our cradle-days, who kept us in all youth's waywardness, and who gathered the little circle of our hearts, will ever guard and hold us in His hands, and bring us safely to Himself, in the bright, beautiful, happy land of the loved.

Evening Devotion.

TOWARD the decline of day, be sure to retire to your private devotions. Read, Meditate, and Pray.

Read not much at a time; but meditate as much as your time, and capacity, and disposition will give you leave; ever remembering that little reading and much thinking—little speaking and much hearing—frequent and short prayers—is the best way to be wise, to be holy, to be devout.

DR. DODDRIDGE.

Prayer.

1. Prayer should be short. The tendency of long prayers is to weary.

2. Prayer should be simple and plain. The Lord's Prayer is, on this subject, an imitable model of devotion.

3. It should be direct. It should be commonly limited to a few topics, and these should be presented in the most simple way possible.

4. Prayer should be solemn.

5. Prayer should be regular.

6. Prayer should be connected especially with the perusal of the Holy Scriptures.

ALBERT BARNES.

JULY.

First.

Morning. Ps. cxlviii. Evening. Acts xii.

THE half of another year has fled. Soul, from the midst of this sultry vale of summer, cast thine eye back to the summit whence thou hast descended! Recall the weeks and months. How bountiful has God been to thee of all His mercies and favors! Whilst thou hast journeyed so happily with thy companions, many have trodden life's rough path alone and unfriended. Many have wept the bitter tears of unsympathized sorrow and affliction. And many, fainting by the way, have been gathered to their long-wished-for rest.

Why hast thou been spared?

Soul, how little hast thou done, and how little art thou doing still! How wouldst thou fill the remnant

of the year—one of the best and brightest that remain to thee? With duties unperformed, with folded arms of idleness, with dreamy, listless unconcern, with thoughts of earth, with affection clinging to its pleasures, or with high and holy purposes of good, with noble resolutions for a life spotless in itself, and eternal in its aims and efforts? O gird thee with thy Master's panoply, and labor on with heart and will, while life is thine.

Look forward to the ascent before thee. Thou knowest not that thou shalt stand on yon wintry ridge, to behold the opening of another year. Thou knowest not what Providence hath in store for thee long ere then.

How many, that, with thee, on last New Years looked across this far-reaching vale, lifting the earnest prayer for health, and strength, and many years, are sleeping now, far in the past! And how many more that now are toiling on, shall falter on the way, and make their final couch amid the falling leaves of coming Autumn! *And why not thou?*

O who can tell but that the first gentle snows of Winter may fall upon my lonely resting-place? *It must soon be.* O Life fled so soon! O Eternity so near! My Soul, how unprepared thou art! I would not, I cannot go thus unfitted to my tomb! God of my deathless spirit, help me!

Second.

Morning. Ps. cxlix. Evening. Acts xiii. 1-31.

O GOD, my Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor! in the ever adorable name of the Lord Jesus, I approach thee with the sincerest reverence and humility, to pay the last acknowledgments of this day to thee, before my eyes are closed with sleep. I praise and magnify thy name for all thy mercies; particularly at this time, for thy preservation of me through the past day, and for that tender care and guidance of thy merciful providence, by which I have been defended from the great and innumerable dangers of soul and body, with which this imperfect state abounds.

Whatever of good or happiness I enjoy, from thy favor I derive it, and to thee I give the praise. My sinful imperfections and my failings, my transgressions and neglects, in many instances, of thy law and my duty, I truly lament, and take the shame of them to myself, humbly beseeching thee to give me true repentance. O forgive me, for thy dear Son's sake, whatsoever thou hast seen amiss in any part of my conduct through the past day, and wash away all my sins in that atoning blood which was shed for sinners. PRIVATE DEVOTION.

Third.

Morning. Ps. cl. Evening. Acts xiii. 52.

"And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost." Yet what trials, what persecutions, what distress on every hand! It is not external quiet, or popular favor or applause, that can bring peace and joy to the soul. The Holy Spirit makes no companionship with these.

But with him who looks from a sincere and humble heart to discern the Master's will, and who seeks only to follow in the way of rectitude, peace abides as a constant guest. To such the Spirit gives assurance of *His* favor whose approbation is a joy that all the tumults of the world can never mar. How lightly pass the tempests of adversity to him who rests in the care and preserving goodness of his Heavenly Father! How pointless all the shafts of malice to him whose shield and buckler are the Omnipotent!

O Thou, whose favor is better than life, fill me with the zeal and energy of these apostles, that like them, I may count all things loss, if I may, at last, win Christ! Henceforth, may my life be a more becoming testimony to the renovating power of Grace!

Fourth.

Morning. Pa. i. Evening. Acts xiv.

O THOU GREAT GOD, who hast created all things, who dost rule among the Nations of the earth as among the armies of heaven, who dost lift us up and cast us down, who hast thus far led us forth with a high hand, on this our Nation's natal day, may we come before Thee with acknowledgments, with praise, and with thanksgiving! May we recognize Thy hand in all these manifold blessings; Thy forbearance, in that we are still spared in all our transgressions; and Thy great favor in that Thou hast called us to so high a destiny! We fear and tremble, when we consider our iniquities, our great national wrongs, lest the great Judge of the earth, who dost ever execute even justice, shall be utterly offended with us, and take away our place and nation.

Thou dost ever destroy the wicked, and sustain the upright. O God of mercy, restore us. Give us rulers loving righteousness, and cause them to rule in Thy fear. May we learn to forsake our errors, to work righteousness, love mercy, and do justice! May Thy law be written in all our hearts, that we may be that happy people whose God is the Lord!

Fifth.

Morning. Ps. ii.

Evening. Acts xv. 1-

WHAT shall I render unto the Lord for all benefits? Thou art ever with me. In life's sli paths Thou dost hold me, in its hours of dar Thou art my Guide, in all its sorrows Thou a consolation and my hope. Thou hast never re me when I have returned to Thy precepts. God, infinite in Thy compassions, mercies favors, what can I return unto Thee for all thi unceasing goodness?

I bless Thy Name, O indulgent and compass Father, that Thou hast looked upon us not in but in tenderness; laying upon us no burdens our weakened natures are not able to bear. Savior's yoke is easy, His burden light. Tho not called us to profitless toil, weary pilgrima pain and suffering.

To redeem us from the evils of the presen and to make us heirs of immortal glory, Thou only called us to deeds of goodness, mercy, and love—to leave the thorny paths of sin f bowers of peace and beauty—to leave unsati husks and feed upon the bread of life—to dr living water and thirst nevermore.

Sixth.

Morning. Ps. iii. Evening. Acts xv. 22.

O God, we pray that our path may be as a shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Complete that which is lacking in our faith. Lead us into all truth, and establish our hearts with grace. Fill our minds with the sublime and elevating objects of revelation, that worldly things may find there no room.

And the Lord make us, also, to increase and abound in love, one toward another, and toward all men. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from us, with all malice; and may we be kind, one toward another, tender hearted; forgiving one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven us.

We commend ourselves, with all our relations and friends, this evening, to thy forgiving mercy and providential care. O Thou that givest thy beloved sleep, indulge us with refreshing repose; or if Thou holdest our eyes waking in the night, may thy song be with us, and our prayer unto the God of our life. Guide us by thy counsel through life, and afterward receive us to glory.

JAY.

Seventh.

Morning. Ps. iv.

Evening. Acts xvi. 1–21.

I BLESS Thee, Heavenly Father, for the loved. Their spirits, ever with me, in tones harmonious as the harps of heaven, sing of faith, of holiness, and Thee. From evening's star of beauty, from the golden glory of departing day, from ocean's deep and lonely desolation, from the wild and solitary grandeur of the mountains, and from every angel-tinted blossom, I hear their voices saying, "There is a world robed in richer glory for the pure in heart." In the soul's far-off wanderings, and in its struggling prayers, seeking for the sinless and the holy, they ever bear the thoughts of a loved companionship, pointing to the higher wisdom and the purer joys of Paradise.

But dearer far, O Blessed Friends, thy presence in the hours of sorrow and affliction. Like Guardian Angels, with words of consolation, sympathy, and prayer, thou dost stay my weak and trembling wings, and, in the arms of faith, and hope, and love, bear me nearer to the throne of mercy. Around the couch of suffering, before the mercy-seat, thou dost ever stand, O Faithful Friends, affection's angel watchers, whispering to the worn and weary soul, "There's rest for thee in Heaven."

Eighth.

Morning. Ps. v.

Evening. Acts xvi. 22.

THY favor, O Lord, is better than life. At midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God. Persecuted from city to city, scourged, and imprisoned, praise still sat upon their lips, and peace abode within their hearts.

May this example of steadfast and unwavering trust and obedience be a perpetual incitement to like faithfulness! When trouble and trial confront me on every side, may it only cause me to cling to Thee with a more tenacious grasp! May it serve to turn away my eyes from beholding vanity, and fix them on Him who alone is goodness—who alone can give our hearts rest and peace! If Thou art our Shield and Defence, who can harm us!

We are too prone to put our trust and confidence in an arm of flesh—too apt to be discouraged at unseemly appearances, to falter because our feeble perceptions do not discern the way of escape. O Thou who art our Guide and Strength, may we follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest, ever rejoicing in the comforting assurance, Thou art with us to the end. May we remember it is God who worketh in us to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Ninth.

Morning. Ps. vi.

Evening. Acts xvii. 1–17.

LET me look at my life in contrast with that of Paul. He laboring night and day, in peril, hunger, and suffering, that he might spread the Gospel, I sitting with folded arms, praying, "Let Thy kingdom come."

What have I done to-day? Has there been a thought, a word, or deed for my Master? Has there been one effort of self-denial, that I might set forth the way of Jesus? Am I living that life of earnest endeavor and heartfelt purpose which will receive the award of "Well done, good and faithful servant"? Am I truly doing all that I should do? Can I not do more? Ought I not to do more? Is there no neglect of manifest duty? Have I not often turned away from Thee for fear of man? And have I not often been shorn of my strength, when I would do good, by the conscious reproach of "Physician, heal thyself"?

O Thou who dost see and know my weakness and inconstancy, my Strength and Hope, wilt Thou so cleanse me in Thy all-purifying blood, that to Thine eyes I may be spotless. So strengthen me, that, while life lasts, I may never hesitate or falter in the way of duty.

Tenth.

Morning. Ps. vii.

Evening. Acts xvii. 18.

LET me put myself upon the most rigid guard against this Athenian love of gossip. What a foul blot this often makes upon many an otherwise spotless Christian character! Associates, let us strive to stand above the common practices of the world, and set forth a nobler way. May our conversation be with Christ! When prompted to speak of the errors and failings of others, let us first ask, How would Jesus have done? and then do likewise.

"It is too true, that some evil passion or other, and to gratify our corruption, is the aim of most conversations. We love to speak of past troubles; hatred and ill-will make us take pleasure in relating the evil actions of our enemies. We compare, with some degree of pride, the advantages which we have over others. We recount, with too sensible a pleasure, the worldly happiness which we enjoy. This strengthens our passions, and increases our corruption.

God grant that I may watch against a weakness that has such evil consequences! *May I never hear*, and *never repeat* with pleasure, such things as may dishonor God, hurt my own character, or injure my neighbor!" BISHOP WILSON.

Eleventh.

Morning. Ps. viii. Evening. Acts xviii.

MAY I be enabled so to draw near unto Thee, O Thou who dost ever listen to our petitions, that Thou wilt draw near unto my heart! Thou hast promised to be with us and sustain us in all our labors and trials — Thou art not afar off, nor unmindful of our efforts or wishes. Give unto me a clearer perception of Thy omnipresence, and a firmer repose of heart on Thy care and aid.

In a world of accidents and mischances, where the wicked and violent meet equal prosperity with the humble and upright, where we never see Thee nor hear Thy voice, where Thy hand is never visibly manifest in our behalf, we too readily become distrustful of Thy perpetual presence, watchcare, and sympathy.

Strengthen, therefore, O Lord, our faith, that we may always feel that not a thought or wish of ours but is recognized by our Heavenly Father. Give us to feel that wherever we are—alone in our own silent chamber, or in the crowded hall — a Savior's eye is over us, a Savior's presence with us; and a Savior's arm will ever be the strength of him who makes it all his Trust.

Twelfth.

Morning. Ps. ix.

Evening. Acts xix. 1-20.

O HOLY SPIRIT, Blessed Comforter, my soul doth long for a deeper, richer experience of Thy renovating, purifying influences. I would be baptized anew. Wilt Thou come, O Holy Messenger, and lead me to the hidden things of God? Enter Thou within my heart, and, perfecting it, lift me nearer heaven. I would know as I have never known, and feel, in the essence of my being, as I have never felt, the Maker and Redeemer of my soul. It is not enough to live so far away from heaven, so unrecognized by Thy love.

May I not, in Thy more perfect image, be permitted to approach nearer to the abode of glory? O Blessed Spirit, though I cannot see my Savior with these eyes, Thou canst touch my heart to faith, and hope, and a spirit of obedience, till I may apprehend all my soul's desire. At this hour, grant me this great blessing. Unworthy, yet will I ask; for my Intercessor is exceeding worthy. Unfit to lift my eyes to heaven, yet will I ask to be lifted there myself; for Christ hath touched me with His cleansing blood, and robed me in His righteousness. To Him be all the glory.

Thirteenth.

Morning. Ps. x. Evening. Acts xix. 21.

On these swift-winged moments, hang the untold responsibilities of the limitless future. Each day, as it passes, bears to the unseen world the good or the evil by which the judgment of our destiny is to be determined. I would not, therefore, rest in a vague and uncertain hope of future good, but wisely strive that the close of every day may witness some pearl of price gathered up for the Hereafter.

I would remember that it is not great deeds, public efforts, nor applauded labors, that constitute the great sum of a well-spent life, but those thousand little, nameless acts of kindness and affection, which ever spread around our presence a halo of joy and happiness. This is that Christianity which I would seek, which is so difficult to attain, and of which, too often, we see so little.

I would preach the Gospel of our Savior by those most effective and difficult discourses, labors of love and a spotless example. These wilt Thou, O blessed Savior, ever accept. O may my whole life be such! Would it might be a living epistle of Gospel purity and excellence! Would, by my conduct, the world might know I have learned of Jesus!

Fourteenth.

Morning. Ps. xi.

Evening. Acts xx. 1-16.

ERE I close my eyes to rest again from life's toil, I would commend all the labors, the thoughts, and the failures of the day to Thee, my merciful Redeemer. Whatsoever I have done that has been right, wilt Thou be pleased to accept; whereinsoever I have sought to honor Thee, may it meet Thy favor; but, O Lord, in all that which I have done amiss, or have failed to do of Thy commandments, in Thine unbounded mercy, O forgive.

"I love to steal awhile away
From every cumb'ring care,
And spend the hours of setting day
In humble, grateful prayer.

I love in solitude to shed
The penitential tear,
And all his promises to plead
Where none but God can hear.

I love to think on mercies past,
And future good implore,—
And all my cares and sorrows cast
On Him whom I adore.

Thus when life's toilsome day is o'er,
May its departing ray
Be calm as this impressive hour,
And lead to endless day."

Fifteenth.

Morning. Ps. xii.

Evening. Acts xx. 17.

ASSOCIATES, as we see how this great apostle of the Gentiles served the Lord with all humility of mind, amid temptations and persecutions, and with many tears, teaching from house to house, not counting his own life dear unto himself, not shunning to declare all the counsel of God, so that he might finish his course with joy, how do our own ease-loving lives appear?

If, after a life of such labor, he feared lest he might have run in vain, and become a castaway, are we safe to rest upon a life of ease and carelessness, however sincere may be our wishes to enter heaven, or however fervent our prayers? We have been bidden to strive to enter in.

Beloved Christian Associates! what is necessary we should do, let us do, at whatever cost and hazard. If it be needful that we labor more, let us labor more. If it be required that we deny ourselves, let us not hesitate at the sacrifice. Even as Christ came to be a sacrifice for us, so let us be filled with a like mind to spend and be spent, if so that, at the last, we may win an inheritance among them that are sanctified.

Sixteenth.

Morning. Ps. xiii.

Evening. Acts xxi. 1-17.

ANOTHER day hast Thou, O God of all goodness and every blessing, been with me and preserved me. It is Thy hand that has bestowed food, raiment, home, and friends. All these blessings come not of the course of nature; they are the gift of Thy love, measureless and free.

In the midst of these daily comforts and enjoyments, may I not forget Thee, O my God, Source of every good; but may my heart be drawn more and more to give itself, in all its strength, and in all its affection, to Thee, the Center and Essence of all virtue and holiness!

Though Thou art so infinite that we may not aspire to Thy perfection, yet Thou hast assured us, those that love Thee shall wear Thine image of purity and glory. O, if it may be mine, when I am gone from this world of toil and sin, where every hour is laden with a sense of wrong and error, if it may be mine to know and feel, in all my being, that I shall bear, henceforth, the Image of my Savior, then will I labor on in hope, and be content, though life be a pilgrimage through a vale of tears, and though no sunlight ever cheer its darkness.

Seventeenth.

Morning. Ps. xiv., xv.

Evening. Acts xxi. 18.

In this season of summer-burdened weariness, when often the flesh is weak, what care and circumspection do we need, that the spirit partake not of the lassitude of the body, and we begin to excuse ourselves from the public duties of religion, and the private duties of the soul!

To some, midsummer brings its unwonted labor; to others, its season of leisure and repose; but from all it flits away with equal speed, bearing from our lives precious days, never to be recalled and lived again. We are too propense to throw aside to more welcome hours, all care, and thought, and religious duty. Yet let us not forget that those more grateful days may not be ours. These may be all that Providence designs for us.

O Thou, to whom all times and seasons are alike, keep our hearts and lives, that, what time soever Thou mayest call for us, we may be found as faithful stewards, waiting Thine appearing. Preserve us especially from a spirit of procrastination.

Beloved Associate, let us not relax our diligence. We have once to tread life's journey, and if faithful to the end, shall enter into rest eternal.

Eighteenth.

Morning. Ps. xvi. Evening. Acts xxii.

"AND they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me."

Thus canst Thou speak to our hearts, wheresoever we may be; and thus wilt Thou, if they are opened to communion with Thy Spirit. Thus would I have Thee, Lord, speak to my soul at this hour of worship. Let me hear that voice which shall speak life and holiness into the dead and sinful heart — which shall bid me live henceforth in Thy strength, and to Thine honor — which shall lift me far above the world, till my soul shall be filled with the spirit of heaven, and lost in contemplation of the majesty and glory of the Unapproachable. Pour upon me that influence of Thy Spirit that shall create all things new—that shall unfold to my wrapt vision the things that are spiritually discerned—that shall plant them as living principles in my heart.

Divine Lord and Master, give me and my Fellow Pilgrim a nearer view of that land of glory, of whose blessedness Thou hast taught our longing souls, that, from its visions, we may be taught the worth of time and immortality.

Eleventh.

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MAY I be enabled so to draw near unto Thee, O Thou who dost ever listen to our petitions, that Thou wilt draw near unto my heart! Thou hast promised to be with us and sustain us in all our labors and trials — Thou art not afar off, nor unmindful of our efforts or wishes. Give unto me a clearer perception of Thy omnipresence, and a firmer repose of heart on Thy care and aid.

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Thus when life's toilsome day is o'er,
May its departing ray
Be calm as this impressive hour,
And lead to endless day."

Twenty-Third.

Morning. Ps. xix. Evening. Acts xxvi. 1-18.

PRAISE shall sit upon my lips, and thankfulness dwell within my heart, that Thou art, O blessed Savior, no longer the persecuted Nazarene, the scoff and jeer of sinful men. Victorious Jesus, Thou hast conquered, and all power in heaven and earth is committed to Thy hands. Take to Thyself Thy great power, O Prince of Peace, and reign throughout the earth, as Thou dost in heaven, and hasten on the coming of Thy kingdom. Touch Thou the hearts of men that they may feel, their eyes that they may see, and their ears that they may hear, the tidings of great joy to all people. May the work of holier lives spread among Thy children! May they be more fully dead to sin and alive to righteousness! May their lives not be so sad an exhibit of the Scripture, "Faith without works is dead."

Awaken us, O Lord of purity, to a purer walk and a chaster conversation. May we strive with earnestness and zeal to live without reproach. Help us, by Thy grace, to inscribe upon our palms, and within our hearts, Holiness unto the Lord. May we, like Paul, cheerfully go forth wheresoever He may call, bearing the standard of the Cross!

Twenty-Fourth.

Morning. Ps. xx.

Evening. Acts xxvi. 19.

ASSOCIATE, how art thou prospering in thy pilgrimage? Is thy soul gaining strength for its arduous toils? Canst thou see that the world has less hold upon thy affections? Art thou a better Christian than at the beginning of the year? Canst thou more plainly discern, far in the dim distance, the hill-tops of thy long-sought Paradise; and doth there play upon their summits, a glory more ravishing to thy soul?

O Christian Companion, what though the way ofttimes be rough and thorny! What though life hath many a weary step, many an hour of toil and suffering! What though its path be marked with steps of anguish, and wet with tears of sorrow! What though our hearts are ever throbbing with swollen grief for their smitten idols! What though, heart-broken, we grope our dark and saddened way friendless and alone! Seest thou not those shining summits? There shall our weary hearts find rest! There shall we find again the loved. There will God wipe all tears from our eyes once and forever. Let us look up—it is not far—the glory of the better land dawns upon us even now.

Twenty-Fifth.

Morning. Ps. xxi. Evening. Acts xxvii. 1-20

As sinks in gentleness and beauty, the gorge summer day, to twilight's heavenly calm, so, Savior, would my soul, turning from the heated of life, find repose in Thee. And as Earth, her intermingled myriad voices, in soft and ge music, chants her vesper-song of praise, my s touched to the love and harmonies of heaven, w lowly bow in prayer, and join the universal hy As she lies lulled in the lap of Thy merciful pr tion, so in my slumbers, O my Savior, may I res the bosom of Thy love.

"Fading, still fading, the last beam is shining:
Father in heaven, the day is declining;
Safety and innocence fly with the light,
Temptation and danger walk forth with the night:
From the fall of the shade till the morning bells chim
Shield me from danger and save me from crime.

"Father in heaven, O hear when we call;
Hear, for Christ's sake, who is Savior of all;
Feeble and fainting we trust in thy might,
In doubting and darkness thy love be our light.
Let us sleep on thy breast, wh
Wake in thy arms when the m

Twenty-Sixth.

Morning. Ps. xxii. 1-19.

Evening. Acts xxvii. 21.

Soul, dost thou sometimes faint in this ceaseless warfare? Is thy burdened heart weary with its conflicts with wickedness and its own evil proclivities? Hast thou been so often overcome, that thy faith, and hope, and strength are gone? Dost thou sometimes feel that all thy striving, thy watchfulness, and prayer, thy longings for a better life and a purer spirit, are swallowed up and lost in the vileness of thy heart, and in the overmastering strength of its love of sin? Has the enemy often persecuted thy soul, and led it captive at his will?

Soul, in whose armor hast thou fought, and with whose strength hast thou been begirt? Hast thou ever made the Lord thy Trust, and been overcome? Or hast thou gone forth to battle in thine own name and power? Turn thou unto Him. Go forth as Paul went, taking the whole armor of God; take that shield of faith which he ever took; labor as he labored; pray as he prayed; and that God which ever held [illegible] hold thee, and at last bring [illegible] or. If thou wouldst [illegible] win his victories [illegible]

Seventeenth.

Morning. Ps. xiv., xv.

Evening. Acts xxi. 18.

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Eighteenth.

Morning. Ps. xvi. Evening. Acts xxii.

"AND they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me."

Thus canst Thou speak to our hearts, wheresoever we may be; and thus wilt Thou, if they are opened to communion with Thy Spirit. Thus would I have Thee, Lord, speak to my soul at this hour of worship. Let me hear that voice which shall speak life and holiness into the dead and sinful heart — which shall bid me live henceforth in Thy strength, and to Thine honor — which shall lift me far above the world, till my soul shall be filled with the spirit of heaven, and lost in contemplation of the majesty and glory of the Unapproachable. Pour upon me that influence of Thy Spirit that shall create all things new—that shall unfold to my wrapt vision the things that are spiritually discerned—that shall plant them as living principles in my heart.

Divine Lord and Master, give me and my Fellow Pilgrim a nearer view of that land of glory, of whose blessedness Thou hast taught our longing souls, that, from its visions, we may be taught the worth of time and immortality.

Nineteenth.

Morning. Ps. xvii.

Evening. Acts xxiii. 1-15.

A CHRISTIAN keeps his eye always on the future, his faith and trust always in the past. He looks to the past for strength and acceptance, he looks to the future for a joyful and a glorious reward. And so long as a Christian keeps his destiny in his eye as the alone bright and magnificent attraction, so long the inferior things that he meets by the way will appear to him comparatively of little value.

We are going to a bright and everlasting home, and we are so smitten with its magnificence and glory, that all present things we feel unworthy to be compared with it. We see, indeed, on all sides around us, many a sparkling stream, rolling, it may be, upon golden sands; but every chime of its waves tells us, "Whoso drinketh this water shall thirst again;" but we can hear, sounding from the olive-shades of Gethsemane, from Bethlehem, from awful Calvary, from the heavenly Jerusalem, from "Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant," "But whoso drinketh of this water shall never thirst, but it shall be in him a well of living water, springing up into everlasting life."

CUMMING.

Twentieth.

Morning. Ps. xviii. 1-19.

Evening. Acts xxiii. 16.

THY hands are over all Thy works. Thou makest the wrath of man to praise Thee. Thou dost never leave Thy children unprotected. As Paul trusted all to the care of Him whom he served, so may I, O Righteous Lord and Master, ever make Thee my Shield and Defence.

May I possess such a heart of filial fear and love, and lead such a life of diligent obedience, that my faith may have an abiding foundation for a reliance on Thy providential watch-care. If I am Thine, then, in the assurances of Thy gracious word, may I give no anxious heed to life's events, for they are all tempered by Thy hand.

Thus would I come to Thee at this hour, for Thou art all my soul's desire. Have I, O Thou All-searching One, any other desire than to be Thine? May I not truly say with Peter, Lord, Thou knowest all Things. Thou knowest that I love Thee? Yea, O Lord, my heart is Thine. On the promises of the blessed Word of Truth it would repose, feeling that here it may abide unmoved. Bestow upon us this evening's hour of prayer, Thy presence filling our souls with joy and peace.

Twenty-first.

Morning. Ps. xviii. 20–36. Evening. Acts xxiv.

THOU EVER-BLESSED COMFORTER, given to poor, erring man to instruct and lead him back again to heaven and his God, how many rudely thrust aside Thy kindness, and with Felix, bid Thee go Thy way! O my soul, do thou ever remember the goodness of thy Redeemer, in bestowing this Holy Messenger, that thou mightest be taught to flee from death! With a heart of grateful welcome, bid this Heavenly Guest abide within, and never turn away from His gentle admonitions.

If He shall teach thee, thou shalt walk in wisdom's ways. In kindness, when we step aside, He recalls us to the path of rectitude. Shall I refuse to heed the counsels of that Friend sent by Jesus? Come, Heavenly Messenger; rest within my heart, and teach me of the Way of Life.

O Redeemer full of grace and goodness, Thou who canst keep me, wilt Thou never let me become so regardless of Thine honor and my own safety, as to refuse the counsels of Thy Holy Spirit! May it ever dwell in my inmost soul, Heaven's Guardian over all my thoughts and actions, till I am fitted for His presence who has purchased me.

Twenty-Second.

Morning. Ps. xviii. 37. Evening. Acts xxv.

"How weak and helpless I am! How insufficient my own efforts to the accomplishing of any worthy purpose! O when shall I be able to throw off this dull, inactive life, and live purely a life of faith in Christ! But, I am unstable as water, like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. And the bribery of Satan—'All this will I give thee'—is the continual inducement to mind earthly things.

Yet, there is a sure refuge for the tempted soul—a strong habitation whereunto we may continually resort. He who was wounded for our transgressions—who was bruised for our iniquities—and by whose stripes we are healed, is an unfailing Rock of Defence. Hither do I flee, and 'more than all in Him I find.' Sweetly, yet tremblingly, would I covenant anew; and how gladly would I

'From all entanglements beneath
Call off my peaceful heart.'

O, our Savior, in the freeness and fullness of Thy tenderness and mercy, bless and save us! May we give to Thee our first, best, supreme affection, and to each other the warm sympathy of Christian hearts."

Twenty-Third.

Morning. Ps. xix.

Evening. Acts xxvi. 1-18.

PRAISE shall sit upon my lips, and thankfulness dwell within my heart, that Thou art, O blessed Savior, no longer the persecuted Nazarene, the scoff and jeer of sinful men. Victorious Jesus, Thou hast conquered, and all power in heaven and earth is committed to Thy hands. Take to Thyself Thy great power, O Prince of Peace, and reign throughout the earth, as Thou dost in heaven, and hasten on the coming of Thy kingdom. Touch Thou the hearts of men that they may feel, their eyes that they may see, and their ears that they may hear, the tidings of great joy to all people. May the work of holier lives spread among Thy children! May they be more fully dead to sin and alive to righteousness! May their lives not be so sad an exhibit of the Scripture, "Faith without works is dead."

Awaken us, O Lord of purity, to a purer walk and a chaster conversation. May we strive with earnestness and zeal to live without reproach. Help us, by Thy grace, to inscribe upon our palms, and within our hearts, Holiness unto the Lord. May we, like Paul, cheerfully go forth wheresoever He may call, bearing the standard of the Cross!

Twenty-Fourth.

Morning. Ps. xx.

Evening. Acts xxvi. 19.

ASSOCIATE, how art thou prospering in thy pilgrimage? Is thy soul gaining strength for its arduous toils? Canst thou see that the world has less hold upon thy affections? Art thou a better Christian than at the beginning of the year? Canst thou more plainly discern, far in the dim distance, the hill-tops of thy long-sought Paradise; and doth there play upon their summits, a glory more ravishing to thy soul?

O Christian Companion, what though the way ofttimes be rough and thorny! What though life hath many a weary step, many an hour of toil and suffering! What though its path be marked with steps of anguish, and wet with tears of sorrow! What though our hearts are ever throbbing with swollen grief for their smitten idols! What though, heart-broken, we grope our dark and saddened way friendless and alone! Seest thou not those shining summits? There shall our weary hearts find rest! There shall we find again the loved. There will God wipe all tears from our eyes once and forever. Let us look up—it is not far—the glory of the better land dawns upon us even now.

Twenty-fifth.

Morning. Ps. xxi. Evening. Acts xxvii. 1-20.

As sinks in gentleness and beauty, the gorgeous summer day, to twilight's heavenly calm, so, my Savior, would my soul, turning from the heated toil of life, find repose in Thee. And as Earth, with her intermingled myriad voices, in soft and gentle music, chants her vesper-song of praise, my soul touched to the love and harmonies of heaven, would lowly bow in prayer, and join the universal hymn. As she lies lulled in the lap of Thy merciful protection, so in my slumbers, O my Savior, may I rest on the bosom of Thy love.

"Fading, still fading, the last beam is shining;
Father in heaven, the day is declining;
Safety and innocence fly with the light,
Temptation and danger walk forth with the night:
From the fall of the shade till the morning bells chime,
Shield me from danger and save me from crime.

"Father in heaven, O hear when we call;
Hear, for Christ's sake, who is Savior of all;
Feeble and fainting we trust in thy might,
In doubting and darkness thy love be our light;
Let us sleep on thy breast, while the night taper burns,
Wake in thy arms when the morning returns."

Sixteenth.

Morning. Ps. xiii.

Evening. Acts xxi. 1-17.

ANOTHER day hast Thou, O God of all goodness and every blessing, been with me and preserved me. It is Thy hand that has bestowed food, raiment, home, and friends. All these blessings come not of the course of nature; they are the gift of Thy love, measureless and free.

In the midst of these daily comforts and enjoyments, may I not forget Thee, O my God, Source of every good; but may my heart be drawn more and more to give itself, in all its strength, and in all its affection, to Thee, the Center and Essence of all virtue and holiness!

Though Thou art so infinite that we may not aspire to Thy perfection, yet Thou hast assured us, those that love Thee shall wear Thine image of purity and glory. O, if it may be mine, when I am gone from this world of toil and sin, where every hour is laden with a sense of wrong and error, if it may be mine to know and feel, in all my being, that I shall bear, henceforth, the Image of my Savior, then will I labor on in hope, and be content, though life be a pilgrimage through a vale of tears, and though no sunlight ever cheer its darkness.

Twenty-Seventh.

Morning. Ps. xxii. 20. Evening. Acts xxviii. 1-15.

"WHOM when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage."

I also will thank Thee, Heavenly Father, for Christian friends and associates. They are the instrumentalities Thou hast given us to cheer and sustain our hearts in this cold and friendless world. To whom shall the Christian Pilgrim look for a living sympathy, an abiding friendship where the heart may feel it has a welcome home, if not to his fellow pilgrims?

O how little is there, in our hearts, of our Savior's love for his own! How little are we kindly affectioned one toward another! How little do we interest ourselves in each other's behalf!

Great Pattern of the human heart, wilt Thou fill me and all Associates with that gentleness of manner, tenderness of heart, sympathy of thought and feeling, and that faithful friendship which Thou ever gavest those whom Thou lovedst to the end. As, at this hour, we bow in penitence and prayer, let us bear to the throne of grace and mercy, in our arms of faith and love, those blessed friends whom God has given us.

Eighteenth.

Morning. Ps. xvi. Evening. Acts xxii.

"AND they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me."

Thus canst Thou speak to our hearts, wheresoever we may be; and thus wilt Thou, if they are opened to communion with Thy Spirit. Thus would I have Thee, Lord, speak to my soul at this hour of worship. Let me hear that voice which shall speak life and holiness into the dead and sinful heart — which shall bid me live henceforth in Thy strength, and to Thine honor — which shall lift me far above the world, till my soul shall be filled with the spirit of heaven, and lost in contemplation of the majesty and glory of the Unapproachable. Pour upon me that influence of Thy Spirit that shall create all things new—that shall unfold to my wrapt vision the things that are spiritually discerned—that shall plant them as living principles in my heart.

Divine Lord and Master, give me and my Fellow Pilgrim a nearer view of that land of glory, of [illegible] blessedness Thou hast taught our longing so from its visions, we may be taught the wort and immortality.

Twenty-Ninth.

Morning. Ps. xxiv. Evening. Rom. i. 1-15.

THE sincere and earnest Christian ever finds it, as Paul did, to his comfort and profit, to commune with his fellows upon the great themes of God and Faith, of Christ and Redemption. We are wont to speak quite too little with each other of our hopes, our labors, and trials. We esteem, too lightly, social Christian intercourse.

It is best for us, especially so for every young disciple, to have some cordial Christian friend, to whom we may open our inmost thoughts, with whom we may hold frequent converse. It gives us strength to commune of life and its toils, of heaven and its rewards. Friendship's guiding hand leads us through many a maze of error, many a starless night of darkness; its heartfelt smile tints many a dark and threatening cloud with the bow of heavenly promise.

And when the light-winged evening zephyrs upward bear to God the earnest, pleading prayer of loving hearts, — Heaven's sweetest music, — angels hover round, and Jesus comes and verifies His blessed promise to be within our midst. Thus, O loving Savior, ever meet us in our vesper orisons!

Thirtieth.

Morning. Ps. xxv.

Evening. Rom. i. 16.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth."

Those among us who stand fast seem to progress in the way. But, alas, how many there are who say Lord, Lord, but do not his commandments! These things ought not so to be. Let us take warning and hold fast whereunto we have attained, that no one take our crown.

Seeing that the time is at hand, should we not be faithful? Our season for laying up treasure in heaven will soon be over—our opportunities to warn the impenitent all be passed, prayer be turned into praise, hope into fruition, and time will be no longer. Blessed is that servant who, at the coming of the Lord, shall be found faithful. He will receive all such unto Himself, that where He is there they may be also.

Does not your soul long for that blessed abode? On earth we draw near to God. In heaven we shall see Jesus as He is. Angels and saints will be our companions. There shall we sing loud hallelujahs to the Lamb for ever and ever.

J. B. Taylor.

Twenty-first.

Morning. Ps. xviii. 20–36. Evening. Acts xxiv.

THOU EVER-BLESSED COMFORTER, given to poor, erring man to instruct and lead him back again to heaven and his God, how many rudely thrust aside Thy kindness, and with Felix, bid Thee go Thy way! O my soul, do thou ever remember the goodness of thy Redeemer, in bestowing this Holy Messenger, that thou mightest be taught to flee from death! With a heart of grateful welcome, bid this Heavenly Guest abide within, and never turn away from His gentle admonitions.

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Twenty-Second.

Morning. Ps. xviii. 37. Evening. Acts xxv.

"How weak and helpless I am! How insufficient my own efforts to the accomplishing of any worthy purpose! O when shall I be able to throw off this dull, inactive life, and live purely a life of faith in Christ! But, I am unstable as water, like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. And the bribery of Satan—'All this will I give thee'—is the continual inducement to mind earthly things.

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Twenty-Fourth.

Morning. Ps. xx. Evening. Acts xxvi. 10.

ASSOCIATE, how art thou prospering in thy pilgrimage? Is thy soul gaining strength for its arduous toils? Canst thou see that the world has less hold upon thy affections? Art thou a better Christian than at the beginning of the year? Canst thou more plainly discern, far in the dim distance, the hill-tops of thy long-sought Paradise; and doth there play upon their summits, a glory more ravishing to thy soul?

O Christian Companion, what though the way ofttimes be rough and thorny! What though life hath many a weary step, many an hour of toil and suffering! What though its path be marked with steps of anguish, and wet with tears of sorrow! What though our hearts are ever throbbing with swollen grief for their smitten idols! What though, heart-broken, we grope our dark and saddened way friendless and alone! Seest thou not those shining summits? There shall our weary hearts find rest! There shall we find again the loved. There will God wipe all tears from our eyes once and forever. Let us look up—it is not far—the glory of the better land dawns upon us even now.

Twenty-Fifth.

Morning. Ps. xxi.

Evening. Acts xxvii. 1-20.

As sinks in gentleness and beauty, the gorgeous summer day, to twilight's heavenly calm, so, my Savior, would my soul, turning from the heated toil of life, find repose in Thee. And as Earth, with her intermingled myriad voices, in soft and gentle music, chants her vesper-song of praise, my soul, touched to the love and harmonies of heaven, would lowly bow in prayer, and join the universal hymn. As she lies lulled in the lap of Thy merciful protection, so in my slumbers, O my Savior, may I rest on the bosom of Thy love.

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Hear, for Christ's sake, who is Savior of all;
Feeble and fainting we trust in thy might,
In doubting and darkness thy love be our light;
Let us sleep on thy breast, while the night taper burns,
Wake in thy arms when the morning returns."

Twenty-Sixth.

Morning. Ps. xxii. 1-19.

Evening. Acts xxvii. 21.

SOUL, dost thou sometimes faint in this ceaseless warfare? Is thy burdened heart weary with its conflicts with wickedness and its own evil proclivities? Hast thou been so often overcome, that thy faith, and hope, and strength are gone? Dost thou sometimes feel that all thy striving, thy watchfulness, and prayer, thy longings for a better life and a purer spirit, are swallowed up and lost in the vileness of thy heart, and in the overmastering strength of its love of sin? Has the enemy often persecuted thy soul, and led it captive at his will?

Soul, in whose armor hast thou fought, and with whose strength hast thou been begirt? Hast thou ever made the Lord thy Trust, and been overcome? Or hast thou gone forth to battle in thine own name and power? Turn thou unto Him. Go forth as Paul went, taking the whole armor of God; take that shield of faith which he ever took; labor as he labored; pray as he prayed; and that God which ever held him in His hand, shall hold thee, and at last bring thee off more than conqueror. If thou wouldst wear his crown of glory, thou must win his victories over self and sin.

Twenty-Seventh.

Morning. Ps. xxii. 20. Evening. Acts xxviii. 1-15.

"WHOM when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage."

I also will thank Thee, Heavenly Father, for Christian friends and associates. They are the instrumentalities Thou hast given us to cheer and sustain our hearts in this cold and friendless world. To whom shall the Christian Pilgrim look for a living sympathy, an abiding friendship where the heart may feel it has a welcome home, if not to his fellow pilgrims?

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Twenty-Eighth.

Morning. Ps. xxiii.

Evening. Acts xxviii. 16.

As I come to the close of these Acts of the Apostles, I would counsel with my own heart. Am I, in any wise, following in the footsteps of our Lord and Master or His disciples? Why must they toil and labor with such unflagging energy and diligence more than I? Did they stand in more pressing need of forgiving grace than I? Am I already so much nearer heaven?

Surely if they thus toiled, sparing not their lives, lest they should fail of the grace of God, what need have I to all that life can render of obedience, and gratitude, and love! What need to let no moment slip unheeded by, to leave no duty unfulfilled! If they gave themselves to the Gospel as the great and only aim of all life's toils, hopes, and solicitudes, why not I as well? If they, who heard of heaven from the Lord himself, deemed life, and time, and earth as nothing beside the glory to be revealed, if heaven was their only thought, Christ their only theme, His Gospel their only labor, O let me learn, from their joyful sacrifice of earth, the exceeding blessedness of that life we seek to win, and the unutterable terror of that death we strive to shun!

Twenty-Ninth.

Morning. Ps. xxiv. Evening. Rom. i. 1-15.

THE sincere and earnest Christian ever finds it, as Paul did, to his comfort and profit, to commune with his fellows upon the great themes of God and Faith, of Christ and Redemption. We are wont to speak quite too little with each other of our hopes, our labors, and trials. We esteem, too lightly, social Christian intercourse.

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Thirtieth.

Morning. Ps. xxv. Evening. Rom. i. 16.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth."

Those among us who stand fast seem to progress in the way. But, alas, how many there are who say Lord, Lord, but do not his commandments! These things ought not so to be. Let us take warning and hold fast whereunto we have attained, that no one take our crown.

Seeing that the time is at hand, should we not be faithful? Our season for laying up treasure in heaven will soon be over—our opportunities to warn the impenitent all be passed, prayer be turned into praise, hope into fruition, and time will be no longer. Blessed is that servant who, at the coming of the Lord, shall be found faithful. He will receive all such unto Himself, that where He is there they may be also.

Does not your soul long for that blessed abode? On earth we draw near to God. In heaven we shall see Jesus as He is. Angels and saints will be our companions. There shall we sing loud hallelujahs to the Lamb for ever and ever.

J. B. Taylor.

Thirty-first.

Morning. Ps. xxvi.

Evening. Rom. ii.

THE first part of this chapter is exceedingly rich to him whose soul would rest in God; for, while it admonishes us of the fearful wrath, and judgment, and most exact justice of Him who shall judge us all, it also gives the most comforting assurances of favor, mercy, and exceeding kindness to those who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for honor, glory, and immortality. Unto these, He promises that unspeakable blessing, an eternal life of happiness.

God infinitely compassionate and ever glorious, may Thy goodness, Thy long-suffering and forbearance toward such a sinful, unworthy being as I am, constrain my heart to all Thy ways and purposes! May I love Thee with all the perceptions and affections of my soul and heart! May I be enabled so to live in Thee now, so to be absorbed in Thy Being, that, when I pass away from earth, my long-lost soul shall wing its way to Thee, as, returning to the ark from her wanderings, came Noah's weary dove.

At the close of this month, let us, *Associates, all,* raise the united prayer for each other that God will hold and keep us safe and steadfast to the end.

AUGUST.

First.

Morning. Ps. xxvii.

Evening. Rom. iii.

In the midst of midsummer's heated toil, let us turn aside to some cooling, meditative bower, and look out on this ripening glory—these dropping charities of heaven. How doth God, in these visible revelations of His government, teach us of the soul and its future destiny!

Seedtime, the hour of labor and promise, has fled. God hath taught the husbandman to scatter there, with a liberal hand, broadcast into the bosom of His providence and faithfulness, the living grain, and undoubting await His fostering care.

The Summer is His. He unlocks the hidden energies of the sunlight, and sends forth its mysterious life; He touches the clouds, and they distil in

gentleness the dews of heaven. At His command, a new creation, bright and beautiful as that over which the morning stars sang for joy, comes forth to beautify the world, and to bless its children. He watches over all that we have cast upon His goodness, and in the fullness of His time will bid us thrust in the harvest-sickle.

Soul, art thou daily scattering along the path of life the seed of truth and virtue? Associate, art thou? It is little what the soil may be; God will ever watch His own. His the summer, ours the seedtime and the blessed harvest of eternity.

O Beloved Associate! when these many weary days of toil are passed, and life's great Spring, for us, is gone forever by, may we, in the grace of a Merciful Redeemer, be gathered to that better land, to reap, of His unbounded goodness, the fruit of time-sown spirit-seed—an eternal life of blessedness!

There will every act of kindness though unrecognized, every deed of goodness though unapplauded by the world, every word of tenderness though known only to the heart it gladdened, every unseen emotion of sympathy for the suffering, every silent and hidden tear wept with the heart-broken—there will these all be found, not as on earth, but, preserved and watered by the Father's hand, as precious seed springing up to immortal joy.

Twenty-Fourth.

Morning. Ps. xx.

Evening. Acts xxvi. 19.

ASSOCIATE, how art thou prospering in thy pilgrimage? Is thy soul gaining strength for its arduous toils? Canst thou see that the world has less hold upon thy affections? Art thou a better Christian than at the beginning of the year? Canst thou more plainly discern, far in the dim distance, the hill-tops of thy long-sought Paradise; and doth there play upon their summits, a glory more ravishing to thy soul?

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Third.

Morning. Ps. xxix. Evening. Rom. v.

It is of Thine infinite mercy, and of Thy grace, boundless and free, that we are made partakers of the hopes of heaven. It is not that we are worthy of Thy favor, not that we have sustained Thy honor in the world, nor that we can become more worthy in the world to come; it is only because Thou hast so loved us as to give us Jesus as our great Atonement, that, being washed and purified, we might be saved. Wherefore, in Thy matchless grace, Thou dost receive all, however vile, that seek Thy favor. The sincere, humble penitent, never sought Thy forgiving face in vain.

Thy goodness, Thy kindness, Heavenly Father, is all that the sinful earth-born have to rest a single hope of heaven upon. That love which gave the Spotless Lamb of God to die for us will not reject the meanest soul that comes in Jesus' name, penitently seeking favor and forgiveness.

His Name, His merits, His sufferings, and death that I might be redeemed, I plead. For His sake, remember me in mercy. For His sake, sustain and keep me and mine, that we may all be His in the kingdom of His glory.

Fourth.

Morning. Ps. xxx. Evening. Rom. vi.

Is it possible for us, in this life, to attain to that perfection of Christian character, wherein we shall have a consciousness that we walk with our Savior, sinless?

Dead unto sin! How those words do echo through the chambers of the soul, awaking it as to the immediate joys of heaven! Dead unto sin! O what visions, too bright, too glorious for earth, flash upon the fettered and earth-bound spirit!

We look away to the bliss of heaven; we breathe its atmosphere of untainted purity; we behold its unsullied holiness—spirits robed in righteousness—the Sinless One, the Savior of a fallen world, crowned with the Father's glory, with arms extended, saying, Come—the Father's smile and love sanctifying all; and, while the words still tremble on our lips, 'May I come? Can I come?' we feel the serpent-coils of sin still around our hearts, and with tear-filled eyes, we can only say, 'Jesus, Thou knowest we would come, but Thou alone canst bring us.'

We would be free from sin!
We would be wholly Thine!

But O, if this may not be on earth, O blessed Savior, vouchsafe it ours in heaven!

Fifth.

Morning. Ps. xxxi. 1-14.

Evening. Rom. vii.

"For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not."

Christian Pilgrim, hast thou not, even in thy best estate, ever found life to be but a ceaseless warfare of evil with the good? Hast thou not found violence without, and treachery within, conspiring to betray thy soul?

Though sometimes we may walk forth in peace and quiet, as in the garden of the Lord, yet should we not forget that the holiness of Eden saved not the Sinless Pair; nor the Divinity within, the Son of God from temptation and assault. Satan doth ever lurk around our souls, that he may seize and sift them as wheat. Thou alone, O Savior, art able to deliver us from his power, and to cause us to abide in safety. In all time of our tribulation, may we remember whence cometh our help.

O Thou who hast Thyself felt the fiery assaults of the Wicked One, in the dark hours of temptation, trial, and distress, wilt Thou be near and strengthen us! Wilt Thou cover us with the shadow of Thy wing, till the calamities of life be overpast!

Sixth.

Morning. Ps. xxxi. 15.

Evening. Rom. viii. 1-23.

In what a constant joy does the spirit dwell, when in the consciousness that it lives in Christ; when it feels within that it is made free from the law of sin and death; when it hath the witness not only that it has been born of God, but is still His child!

O how doth this spirit ever look upward! How doth it lift us above the world and all its toils, its sorrows, and afflictions, and bid us live in the glory so ravishingly revealed, though but so dimly, of the world to come!

If we are heirs of heaven, co-heirs with Christ, well may we say, and feel, and rejoice, with Paul, That the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. While the body is still upon earth, the soul rises to the reality of spirit-life and longs to depart, as being far better.

O my Christian Friend, is thy soul conscious of its heirship with Christ? What matter then what the world may be? What though its springs of happiness be dry, its friends be few, its sorrows many? It is enough, if, at last, we may attain that glory unrevealed.

Seventh.

Morning. Ps. xxxii. Evening. Rom. viii. 24.

SHALL we, the beings of such a shadow-life, essay to compass the Infinite? Shall we attempt to penetrate that mystery which veils the Almighty from our scrutiny? Is aught He does, *less right because we cannot fathom it?* What if we cannot comprehend decrees, predestination, or election; is what they represent any the less a part of the Infinitely Good? What if there be, in God's dealings with the sons of men, many things inexplicable! What if the path of this mysterious life lead through many a sad and incomprehensible experience! What if the cup of happiness is often dashed from our hand as it was about to touch the lips! What if the light of our hearts is quenched just as it began to open a paradise to the soul! Are God's ways less right, and His dealings less in mercy or in blessing, because they sometimes touch our hearts to sorrow, and our eyes to tears?

Soul, cease thee from the vain and weary effort to circumscribe the Infinitely Wise, but know, and rest thee, in the darkest, saddest hours of life, in His assurance, That *all things* work together for good to them that love God.

Eighth.

Morning. Ps. xxxiii. 1-10. Evening. Rom. ix.

At the close of another day, into Thy hands, O Lord my Creator, do I commend myself. As clay in the hands of the potter, so would I be in Thine. Mould Thou me after Thine entire will, for I know it is Thy will that I should be a vessel unto honor. Rest Thy forgiving grace on all the errors of this day, and now Thy transforming power upon my spirit. The evil that is within me, the movings of which I so often feel, wilt Thou eradicate! May every emotion, every impulse, and every thought be subordinated to Thy will.

Come, O Thou that hast made us, and recreate us at this hour of worship. And, while we lift up this prayer, may we unbar the gateways of our hearts, and bid Thee enter with all Thy searching light and power, and bring forth the lurking enemies of Thy grace. May we surrender all to Thee! Yea, O Lord, at each and every hour of prayer, may our hearts and souls be reconsecrated to Thee! Enter in, O Holy One, and of Thy goodness, grace, and power, make us fitting temples for the indwelling of Thy Holy Spirit, and light anew our devotion's altar fires.

Ninth.

Morning. Ps. xxxiii. 11.

Evening. Rom. x.

PRAYER is positively and nobly answered, in our being kept prayerful, notwithstanding any lack of more sensible answers. A spirit of supplication is a spirit of grace, however few sensible answers may follow its exercise. "I will wait on the Lord who hideth his face," is a resolution quite as decisive of a gracious state, or of a new heart, as is the triumphant avowal, "I love the Lord because he hath heard my supplications;" perhaps more decisive of a divine change.

Prayer is positively, and ought to be held as sweetly answered, in our being kept afraid of those tempers and habits which are incompatible with present or final success in prayer. Joy, assurance, and serenity are at a higher premium in the market of experience than self-abasement, or self-distrust, or self-control, or godly jealousy of sin and temptation. The former are not, however, more valuable, though more popular than the latter. Prayer for more comfort is often best answered, and always well, because safely answered, by the gift of humility and self-jealousy.

FOSTER.

Tenth.

Morning. Ps. xxxiv. 1-10. Evening. Rom. xi. 1-15.

THUS departs in silence and in beauty, another of Summer's bright and glorious creations; and thus glides away to the world of forgetfulness and death, another portion of this mysterious life.

At this blessed hour of prayer and meditation, my thoughts, like winged angels, fly away to thee, my friend, and I am again in thy living presence. O what a ceaseless, hopeless sadness, absence from the loved ever gives the heart. Memory, sweet and blessed, in every joy and in every sorrow, gives in faithfulness thy treasured image; and, though at this spirit-hour I seem to feel thy gentle presence, how little is this all to what the heart doth crave of the heart's assurance of faithfulness and affection!

O loved and precious Friends, I know that, at this holy hour, thou dost often think of me,

"For I feel thou art near,
And where'er I may be,
The spirit of love
Keeps a watch over me."

Thus may it watch, and thus may angels watch over us throughout life's lonely pilgrimage, till in heaven we need their watch-care no more.

Eleventh.

Morning. Ps. xxxiv. 11.

Evening. Rom. xi. 16.

"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."

My soul, try to see God in everything, and every thing in God! Lose thine own will in His. Enter on no pursuit, engage in no plan, without Paul's prayer and condition, "If so the will of the Lord be." How it would hallow prosperity, and sweeten adversity, thus, in all things, to follow like Israel the Guiding Pillar—at His bidding to pitch our tents —at His bidding to strike for march!

Each providence has a voice, if we would only hear it. It is a finger-post in the journey, pointing us to "the right way that we may go to the city of habitation."

I love to think of Thy manifold gracious interpositions in the past—God sustaining me in trial—God supporting me in perplexity—God rescuing me when in danger—God helping me when vain was the help of man. "When my foot slipped, Thy mercy, O Lord, held me up." Thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice."

Morning Watches.

Twelfth.

Morning. Ps. xxxv. 1-17.

Evening. Rom. xii.

This chapter is replete with noble Christian sentiments and practical precepts. What simplicity, what genuine kindness and sympathy, what disinterested regard for his fellow Christians, beams out in every line! Let me turn and read again from the ninth verse onward, and, as I read, examine my own heart, to see if all these evidences of Christian life find there a deep and hearty response—such a response as they found in Paul's.

Can I say to the ninth verse, Thus do I? Am I always kindly affectioned? Do I prefer the honor of another to my own? Do I never feel envious at the preferment of others, no more worthy? Am I diligent in business, that I may thus more acceptably serve my Master? Are all my labors for Him? Hath patience an abiding-place in my breast, even in all trial, disappointment, and tribulation? Do the demands of the poor, the ignorant, the suffering, the Church, and the heathen, meet a liberal and cheerful requital at my hands?

These are heart-searching tests of Christian vitality, yet would I apply and practice them with prayerful, earnest circumspection.

Thirteenth.

Morning. Ps. xxxv. 18.

Evening. Rom. xiii.

"AND that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep."

Endeavor, in every duty, to raise thy affections nearer to heaven. God's end in the institution of his ordinances was, that they should be as so many steps to advance us to our rest, and by which, in subordination to Christ, we might daily ascend in our affections. Let this be thy end in using them, and doubtless they will not be unsuccessful.

How have you been rejoiced by a few lines from a friend, when you could not see him face to face! And may we not have intercourse with God in his ordinances, though our persons be yet so far remote? May not our spirits rejoice in reading those lines which contain our legacy and character for heaven?

With what gladness and triumph may we read the expressions of divine love, and hear of our celestial country, though we have not the happiness to behold it!

Come, then; renounce formality, custom, and applause, and kneel down in secret or public prayer, with hope to get nearer to God before thou risest up.

BAXTER.

Fourteenth.

Morning. Ps. xxxvi. Evening. Rom. xiv.

HAVE I that spirit of self-denial which leads me to forego the indulgence of those appetites—innocent though they may be—which, to the less strong, become, so often, the minister of evil? Can I willingly and cheerfully set aside these enjoyments, lest my brother fall through my example? Do I plead that they are harmless, innocent, safe, or even beneficial to me? What though my brother be at fault, that he is not the master of his own body and spirit; yet are we taught, "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak."

Let me not merely ask what is lawful, but also what is expedient; ever bearing in mind, "None of us liveth unto himself."

Give unto me, Heavenly Father, that mastery of self, that power of self-denial, and that sympathy for others, which shall enable me to "follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith we may edify one another." O may the great thought and purpose of doing good to others take a deeper root within my soul, and become its great leading impulse!

Fifteenth.

Morning. Ps. xxvii. 1-20. Evening. Rom. xv. 1-14.

THE great distinguishing element of Christianity is "good will toward men"—sympathy of heart, and outward benevolence. He whose affections find no lodgment beyond himself, whose sympathies are limited by personal interest, whose actions are stimulated only by a selfish aim, however large his beneficence, can lay little claim to being a follower of Christ—of Him who left a throne of glory that He might live a life of toil, suffering, and sorrow, to bless His enemies.

May I be filled with a more substantial understanding and conviction that love and effort for the good of others, without the hope of requital, is the most Christlike of all that can engage our thoughts or efforts! How persistently and how lamentably do we all live for self!

In the light of these principles, how will the actions of to-day bear scrutiny? Have I lived for self, or for Christ and His children? Have I borne the infirmities of the weak, or left them to their feebleness and toil? Teach me, Thou great and blessed Pattern, how to live, how to labor, and how to love Thee and Thine.

Sixteenth.

Morning. Ps. xxxvii. 31.

Evening. Rom. xv. 16.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me."

How often, Beloved Associates, do we feel that we need the sympathizing, earnest prayers of Christian friends! When darkness comes upon the soul, when those with whom we have been wont to take sweet counsel, have left us to sad and lonely hours, when our own sins have led us astray, and the face of our Heavenly Father is turned away, how it strengthens our faltering courage, and lifts us up with a strong hand from the vale of our humiliation toward the Mercy Seat, to know that dear friends bear us, in the arms of faith and prayer, up to the All-Merciful!

O Cherished Friends, may God be with you all at this hour of evening sacrifice! and, as you bow before His presence, may mercy-drops, falling on the stains of sin, make your spirits spotless as the vesture of the angels, while smiles of favor bid you welcome to your Heavenly Father's bosom! May angels watch you in your slumbers!

Seventeenth.

Morning. Ps. xxxviii. 1-12. Evening. Rom. xvi.

MAY these salutations of Paul instruct us of the true nature and value of earthly friendships! As these friends sustained, comforted, and cheered Paul, so may we many a weary, disheartened pilgrim.

The world will love its own, and shall not Christ's? Shall it be that His children find no warm, heartfelt sympathy, while the vile make friends on every side? How dreary does the world become when the heart finds none that respond to the outbreathings of its tenderness and affection!

How often do we feel that, when we turned away from the world to join the people of God, we found little of that warmth of heart, that earnest interest and regard, which we knew and felt had been ours hitherto! This ought not so to be! Let us open wide our hearts to every child of Christ! Let us show a brother's interest, and extend to them a brother's sympathy!

May we seek to become one in heart, even as we hope to be one with Him in our Father's House! Yet let us give our hearts to none whose friendship may not be eternal. Earth-born friendships can never lift the soul toward heaven.

Eighteenth.

Morning. Ps. xxxviii. 13.

Evening. 1 Cor. i.

O ALMIGHTY LORD, pardon, I beseech thee, the sins of which I have this day been guilty; consider the weakness of my nature; and, for thy dear Son's sake, be not extreme to mark what is done amiss. I magnify thy goodness, which has so long spared me, and has granted me so much time for repentance; give me grace, that I may henceforth turn it to a better account. Enable me, this night, to shake off all worldly cares and desires, and to meditate upon thee; and let thy Holy Spirit be present with me in my devotions, to purify my heart, and to bring before me the things which concern my peace, and to inspire me with godly resolutions.

O Heavenly Father, I commit myself to thy holy keeping this night, and desire to rest securely under the shadow of thy protection. Defend me from all perils and dangers, and especially from those which may assault and hurt the soul. Prepare me, by comfortable repose, for the duties of to-morrow; and grant that I may rise disposed and strengthened for thy service, as a faithful, diligent disciple of thy blessed Son.

BISHOP BLOOMFIELD.

Nineteenth.

Morning. Ps. xxxix. Evening. 1 Cor. ii.

UNTO Thee, the God of my Salvation, do I lift my voice of praise, that this Gospel of Thy Grace stands not in fleshly wisdom and strength, but in Infinite Power and Goodness.

O ever-indulgent Father, I thank Thee, that in all our perplexities through ignorance, in all our failures through sinfulness, in all our discouragements through weakness, we may come to Thee, and, casting the heavy burdens of this weary life on Thee, feel that Thou knowest us, and hast pity—Thou wilt instruct and guide us—Thou wilt restore our souls, and feed us with the bread of life. Yea, give us of the hidden manna, and of the water of salvation. Wilt Thou bestow that hidden wisdom, O Light of all light, upon my soul, that it doth so much desire? I would imbibe within my very being that spirit that searcheth all things; yea, the deep things of God.

Come, O Blessed One, and take my heart as Thine, and let me feel I am one with Thee. Sanctify every impulse and emotion, hallow every thought and feeling, and keep me wholly Thine in all of life's vicissitudes.

Twentieth.

Morning. Pa. xl.

Evening. 1 Cor. iii.

I WOULD I were wholly Christ's! My soul, like a lost and weary wandering sheep, doth long to hear Thy voice, O Thou Shepherd of the straying. Sick and fainting, it would turn away from all that earth may offer, and listen to those heavenly words which ever fall from Thy lips for those that will hear Thee.

O what holy calm, what serene tranquillity, reigns within the soul, when, chafed and torn, discouraged and despairing, the words of Jesus come like softened music, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

This rest to my soul, give me at this hour, O blessed Jesus! I come to Thee, I bow before Thee, I confess all my transgressions. Touch me, Thou Spotless One, with Thy cleansing blood, and bid my soul be clean. Take me, O take me, Lord, at this hour, to Thyself, and give me to feel that, in my slumbers, I repose on the bosom of my Savior. May I sink away to quiet sleep, in the consciousness that all is well! And if, ere the morning dawns, Thou shalt call for me, O my Redeemer, wilt Thou remember me in Thy boundless mercy. Thou alone canst save me in the hour of trial.

Twenty-first.

Morning. Ps. xli. Evening. 1 Cor. iv.

"BESTOWER of all blessings, Thou givest us a gracious, glorious privilege with these evening shades. We love, at this calm hour, to lift our hearts in hope and thankfulness to the Father of our spirits—to renew our covenant vows—to confess our many failures—to plead for greater diligence—to seek present assurance, and to obtain the earnest of a life in a purer world.

Our hearts ever yearn instinctively for that which is fadeless and undimmed by the sweep of years. With earth's enjoyments thickly clustering round us, we are ever anticipating those heavenly mansions, where even shadows do not come, and where no dissonant note disturbs the blissful harmony.

O Thou who art the Center of all our hopes, the Giver of all our joys, our Strength in weakness, vouchsafe to us now such a manifestation of Thy love and favor as will enable us to go from this evening's prayer in the blessed consciousness that, according to the plenitude of Thy mercy, and the tenderness of Thy compassion, so have we received richly of Thy communicable fullness."

ASSOCIATE.

Twenty-Second.

Morning. Ps. xlii. Evening. 1 Cor. v.

LET me beware of evil associates. There are wolves in sheep's clothing. And there is also, in this dark vale of wickedness, many a saint clad in the unobtrusive robes of modesty and retirement. The one, meeting us at every turn, by honeyed words, lures us to many a wasted hour and evil thought, harsh judgment and bitter word. The other sought out, away from contact with the rude world, opens, to our happy hearts, bright visions of the pure and holy, ennobles and elevates our human nature, fills our breasts with that Charity that bears, and hopes, and endures all, makes us long to bear, with our own hands, the burdens of our weary fellow mortals, and allies us in our hopes and heart to Him, whose we are.

Why should I turn away from these angel natures, whose thoughts ever woo us to the holy, to those whose hearts and eyes are ever on the earth? O Thou who seest all hearts, make me a temple meet for Thy Spirit, and then bestow upon me the companionship of the good, those within whose hearts Thou hast a dwelling-place, and for whom Thou hast prepared mansions in Thy Father's House!

Twenty-Third.

Morning. Ps. xliii. Evening. 1 Cor. vi.

"LORD, I am fearfully and wonderfully made." A body hast Thou prepared and given me. Thine own infinite wisdom designed it, and Thy hands fashioned it. For Thy glory didst Thou create it, and to be the temple of Thy Holy Spirit consecrate it, yet, in Thy goodness, given it me for the soul's enjoyment. Thou hast made me to see, to hear, to perceive, to love, and enjoy, that, in these, I might be happy, and in my happiness honor Thee.

When I stroll upon the mead, or climb upon the mountain-top, may I not forget it is the mechanism of Infinite Wisdom which has brought me hither. When the blessed light pours in upon the soul, tinting there the beauties of the earth, the ocean, and the star-bestudded glory of the sky—when music like dancing fairies from the spirit-world, opens, in its wild and wizard harmonies, to the enchanted spirit, glimpses of a world too immaculate and holy for our souls to bear, O then, may I remember, God of goodness, that Thou hast, of Thy loving kindness, given me all this exquisite and mysterious capability of soul and body, that I might thus draw happiness, and learn of Thyself and Heaven!

Twenty-fourth.

Morning. Ps. xliv. 1–8. Evening. 1 Cor. vii. 1–19.

In the light of that coming eternity when we shall see our thoughts and actions as they appear to Thee, Thou Judge of all, would I desire to contemplate the deeds of this closing day. Give me now a proper spirit of self-examination.

Yet it is well, perhaps, I cannot see the failures of each day, as they will then be revealed to my humbled recognition; lest, overwhelmed with my vileness, my incessant errors and transgressions, my heart should fail, and my spirit sink within me. Yet give me, Heavenly Father, so to see myself that I may feel my utter nothingness, and place my only hope in the righteousness of my Atonement.

Thou hast taught us that, when we have done every duty, we are still unprofitable servants. What, then, can I hope for in myself! How many of this day's deeds can meet the approval of the Master! Is there one wherein I might not have sought more truly to do His will? How constantly do I need greater wisdom and purity of purpose, a more unflagging energy and steadfastness of soul. May the coming day, if it be mine, bear record of no duty unfulfilled!

Twenty-Fifth.

Morning. Ps. xliv. 9.

Evening. 1 Cor. vii. 20.

AGAIN at the close of the day's toil, do I come to Thee, my Savior, for communion. My spirit seeks Thee as its rest and hope, its consolation and comfort. The little all that I can do is naught. I feel within, that I am an unprofitable servant. Little have I done, this day, to Thine honor. My deeds of goodness, my pious thoughts, my righteousness, O how vile in the presence of Thy purity, Thou Most Holy. Yet will I come in humble confidence, and commend myself to Thee, for Thou art merciful.

Low at the foot of the Cross I bow, here presenting all my weakness, pleading all that the burdened sinner need ever plead—the name of Jesus. Shine, O Star of Mercy, shine from Heaven, in upon my dark and sin-sick soul, and lift its downcast eyes to Thee. Shine upon the narrow way, and let my feet turn aside no more to the ways of Death!

Within our hearts, beloved Friend, and upon our paths, may the light of Truth and Mercy ever brightly beam, guiding us through all darkness and dangers safely to the land of rest. Lord, remember all Associates to-night.

Twenty-Sixth.

Morning. Ps. xiv.

Evening. 1 Cor. viii.

THE discriminating power of conscience is improved by reflecting upon the moral character of our actions, both before and after we have performed them. If, before we resolve upon a course of conduct, or before we suffer ourselves to be committed to it, we deliberately ask, Is this right? Am I now actuated by appetite, by self-love, or by conscience? we shall seldom mistake the path of duty. After an action has been performed, if we deliberately and impassionately examine it, we may without difficulty decide whether it was right or wrong. Now, with every such effort as this, the discriminating power of conscience is strengthened. We discern moral differences more distinctly; and we distinguish between actions, that before seemed blended and similar. Thus, every time a man does right, he gains a victory over his lower propensities, acquires self-control, and becomes more emphatically a freeman. Every time a man does wrong, that is, yields to his lower propensities, he loses self-control, he gives to his passions power over him, he weakens the practical supremacy of conscience, and becomes more perfectly a slave. DR. WAYLAND.

Twenty-Seventh.

Morning. Ps. xlvi. Evening. 1 Cor. ix.

"For if I do this thing willingly I have a reward." "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land."

Obedience however implicit, and acquiescence however full, come utterly short of gaining the favor of God. It is the heart that He requires. Though I may sustain the honor of the Lord's House, frequent the place of prayer, "pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin," yet if it be as the ox to the slaughter, or the submission of the fettered captive, He that seeth the heart shall behold my offering afar off.

I would, O Lord my God, worship Thee in spirit and in truth! I would walk before Thee in the new and living way, I would have my heart lead my hands and my lips. To this end pour upon me the spirit of love, faithfulness, and obedience, that my whole life may harmonize in all its inward monitions and its outward workings with Thy Spirit—till my heart shall rest, in all the fullness of its affection, in the bosom of its Heavenly Father, and all its hidden springs of life be but Thy Spirit working in me.

Twenty-Eighth.

Morning. Ps. xlvii. Evening. 1 Cor. x.

"God is faithful." Blessed assurance! Not like ourselves, with hearts as unstable as the waves, and affections changeful as the clouds—God the same to-day, yesterday, and forever—faithful still in His long-suffering and forbearance, in all His promises of mercy and forgiveness—faithful to us, how oft soever we may turn away from Him.

Soul, when thou art tempted on every side, when thou art tried as in a fiery furnace, when thou art left alone with none to offer consolation, when all thy labors come to naught, and thy good is evil spoken of, when thou art overcome of the wickedness of thine own heart, and hast done that thou wouldst not, when the enemy has come in upon thee as a flood, and it seems availless to struggle on, then, O desponding Soul, turn thee to thy Refuge, and, in the strength of these blessed words—"God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it,"—lay hold of that Arm which is mighty to deliver, and in its strength, feel the certainty of thy trust and hope.

Twenty-Ninth.

Morning. Ps. xlviii. Evening. 1 Cor. xi.

"LET my light so shine, that others seeing my good works may be led to copy them, to the glory of my Father in Heaven. And O, let me not be satisfied with the mere profession of Christ as my righteousness, or of Christ as the Head of my Church, but may I so study His life and character that I may walk even as He walked, and that the same mind may be in me which was also in Christ Jesus. Looking unto Him, may I be made like unto Him.

Jesus spreads his banner o'er us,
  Cheers our famished souls with food;
He the banquet spreads before us,
  Of his mystic flesh and blood.
Precious banquet; bread of heaven;
  Wine of gladness, flowing free;
May we taste it, kindly given,
  In remembrance, Lord, of thee.

In thy holy incarnation,
  When the angels sang their birth;
In thy fasting and temptation;
  In thy labors on the earth;
In thy trial and rejection;
  In thy suff'rings on the tree;
In thy glorious resurrection;
  May we, Lord, remember thee.

Thirtieth.

Morning. Ps. xlix.

Evening. 1 Cor. xii.

MAY this chapter teach me to be content with the lot wherein my life has been cast. God hath set the members every one as it hath pleased Him. The natural heart is ever envious of the better lot of others. We think were our circumstances thus and thus, and had we this privilege and that blessing, we could live a more acceptable life.

Soul, check these whisperings of evil, and rest thee in the assurance, that He hath set thee as it hath pleased Him in the fullness of His wisdom and protecting goodness.

That prosperity, that position, or those talents which thou enviest, might prove thy greatest enemy in the way of holiness. He that doeth all things well, in tenderness and compassion, hath set thee where thou art. *Here* hath He a work for thee to do. Thou alone canst accomplish it. To this special labor hath He fitted thee. Here canst thou labor most to His acceptance, and here, in the midst of all those circumstances of trial and disappointment which His Providence unfolds, canst thou best prepare for Heaven. Here shall all things, if the soul be right, work together for good.

Thirty-first.

Morning. Ps. l. 1-15. Evening. 1 Cor. xiii.

"AND now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three: but the greatest of these is charity."

Heaven-born Charity, that hopeth all, believeth all, and endureth all, loveliest of Heaven's messengers to earth, seraph of purity immaculate, whose brow is ever crowned with the olive-wreath of peace, around whose feet the roses bloom, and within whose heart Religion's altar-fires are never dim, fold thou thy silken wings dripping with the dews of Heaven's mercy, and resplendent with its inimitable glory, and, with thy lily-sceptre, touch my sinful heart to a holiness meet for a shrine of thy chastened spirit, for thine in-dwelling temple!

O Angel Charity, who dost with forgiveness ever veil error and transgression, and turn aside inexorable Justice with the gentle hand of Mercy, enter thou and reign within my heart, tinging all its thoughts and judgments with the softened light of heaven, till, lost to earth, the soul, in the rapt visions of the glory held in reservation for the pure, shall wing its way with thee, upward to the final home of the sinless and the holy—to the arms of its Redeemer!

SEPTEMBER.

First.

ning. Ps. l. 16.

Evening. 1 Cor. xiv. 1-19.

GENTLY but swiftly, like a beautiful dream, has sped this summer gleam of sunshine. So have fled many a vision of fancy, and many an hour of sweet, light-hearted joy; and so will haste away the warm and cheering summer years of life. Associates, let us turn and retrospect our progress. As from yon dim summits, we have toiled along this great highway of the generations, daily drawing nearer to its end, whither have our steps been tending? Have we watched incessantly lest our feet should slip or turn aside from the straight and narrow path? Have we made the Word of truth, the lamp of our path in every time of darkness?

Has never Pride filled us with his lofty words;

Vanity apparelled us with her gay attire; Indolence wooed us to his dreamy bower of ease, or Pleasure led us captive with her syren song? Or in all the way, have Faith, and Hope, and Charity been our counsellors and heart-companions? Has Jesus been our constant and most welcome theme, and has the soul found its strength, and life its solace and comfort, in the joys of Heaven?

Then may we bid this bright and blessed summer, with its cooling forest shades, its lovely meditative bowers, its twilight rambles with the loved, its thrice happy hours when affection made our little homes a Paradise, and more precious far, those sacred moments when a Savior held communion with our hearts, then may we bid these all a long and last farewell without regret; for a lovelier summer and happier hours await us in the Better Land.

And thou, Autumn, with thy deep-blue sky and purer air, thy ruddy fruits and golden grain shall not be unwelcome. As through thy bending harvest fields, toiling heavenward, we make our way, let us gather strength and wisdom from thy admonitions. More solemnly impressed with the brevity of the spirit's seed-time, let us with unwonted zeal and faithfulness press upon life's great labor, seeking so to sow, that, in the world's great harvest, our sheaves may be abundant.

Second.

Morning. Pa. li.

Evening. 1 Cor. xiv. 20.

A FEW, perhaps a very few more days like this, and all my work is done. I would more fully comprehend and realize this contingency. A few more such days' work as this, and life's great labor ended? How am I startled as I contemplate this statement as possible, probable, certain!

To leave the world as I now am—to leave all that which I have thought to do, so incomplete, if not scarcely touched—but above all, to leave this world of preparation, and enter on eternal life in that abode where all is as pure and unsullied as the Divine Majesty—O how unfit! how utterly unprepared! O my Redeemer, deepen the work of grace in my heart—this heart of sin and sloth.

God of glory yet of compassion, in whose presence I must so shortly stand, and to whose all-searching eye, every deed, and thought, and impulse, however hidden, must stand forth, before Thee do I prostrate myself in penitence for my errors, in shame for my negligence and unconcern. I come and ask for strength, and zeal, and energy. O give me a more unwavering faithfulness to treasure up the pearls of time as each day passes by!

Third.

Morning. Ps. lii.

Evening. 1 Cor. xv. 1–20.

"Tarry with me, O my Savior,
For the day is passing by;
See, the shades of evening gather,
And the night is drawing nigh;
Tarry with me, tarry with me,
Pass me not unheeded by.

Dull my ear to earth-born music,
Speak thou, Lord, in words of cheer;
Feeble, tottering my footsteps,
Sinks my heart with sudden fear.
Cast thine arms, dear Lord, around me—
Let me feel thy presence near.

Faithful memory paints before me
Every deed and thought of sin;
Open thou the blood-filled fountain—
Cleanse my guilty soul within.
Tarry, thou forgiving Savior—
Wash me wholly from my sin.

Deeper, deeper grow the shadows;
Paler now the glowing west;
Swift the night of death advances,—
Shall it be the night of rest?
Tarry with me, O my Savior,
Lay my head upon thy breast.

Feeble, trembling, fainting, dying,
Lord, I cast myself on thee;
Tarry with me through the darkness—
While I sleep still watch by me,
Till the morning; then awake me,
Dearest Lord, to dwell with thee."

Fourth.

Morning. Ps. liii., liv.

Evening. 1 Cor. xv. 21–41.

O THOU who art the resurrection and the life, daily would I die unto sin, and daily would I be raised anew in Christ Jesus. Daily would I seek to throw off the old man with his deeds, and put on the New Man in righteousness. It is not sufficient that this day be as yesterday—I would attain to a higher perception of things spiritual, to a more entire rendering up to God, all that I am.

I cannot see that progression from the earthly to the heavenly, which I feel I ought to make. I have not that consciously increasing mastery over self and all its evil promptings, which I desire and must possess. If I am to live in heaven, all that preparation which I can, by every effort, make, must be made. I must not leave to chance or accident, those needful things which Jesus has kindly pointed out as prerequisites for admission to His eternal rest.

O Thou, my Strength and Hope, come within my heart and recreate me in the purity, the holiness, the faithfulness, the obedience, and the love of Thy blessed Gospel. Enable me now to give myself to Thee in this evening's worship, and to feel Thy moving presence in my heart.

Fifth.

Morning. Ps. lv. 1-15. Evening. 1 Cor. xv. 42.

BLESSED AND ADORABLE REDEEMER, who art the first-fruits of them that slept, I bless Thee for this comforting assurance which Thou hast here given us —that we shall not all sleep—that Thou wilt raise us in the likeness of Thyself—though we sow in weakness, Thou wilt raise us in strength—though we sow a natural body, Thou wilt raise a spiritual and glorious body—though we are now corruptible, we shall then be incorruptible—forever free from the ills, the pains, the weariness, the toils, and labors of mortality.

Thou compassionate and ever-blessed One, what can a vile and sinful mortal ask that Thou hast not already, and of Thine own favor, freely promised us?

My beloved Fellow Pilgrim, is it ours to hope that, in so brief a time, we shall be changed—robed in the righteousness of the Lamb of God, and bear evermore the image of the Heavenly? O hope full of joy! O, when that great and notable day shall come, may we find each other and all the loved crowned with honor and immortal blessedness, to go not forth forever from the kingdom of our Father's glory.

Sixth.

Morning. Ps. lv. 16.

Evening. 1 Cor. xvi.

How many a great door, and effectual, is opened unto us, into which we never enter! How often we close our eyes, lest we should see some door opened by the hand of Providence, bidding us enter there and labor!

How much more I should accomplish, if I but had a heart that was ever seeking opportunities of doing good, instead of preparing excuses for negligence and disinclination? What I need, is, less seeking to evade and avoid, and more sincerity in seeking the will and labor of my Master.

Has there been no neglected opportunity to-day, no occasion where a kindly word or deed might have been proffered in the name of my Master? Are there not many such, which my habitual inattention has permitted me to overlook?

Inspire me, O Lord, my God, with a never-tiring zeal—a zeal that will permit no moment to pass unconsecrated to Thyself and Thy service. May I be filled with a higher ambition to be, not only a good servant, but a faithful servant—to show forth the excellency of that Gospel which, to me, is life, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost!

Seventh.

Morning. Ps. lvi.

Evening. 2 Cor. i.

O LET me henceforth, with simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, have my conversation in the world! O that I could thus at all times be off from myself, and learn the whole weight of my dependence upon God —looking unto Him for the supplies of His Spirit in every time of need! The perfection of the creature lies in the constant habit of bringing His emptiness to the fullness that is in Christ Jesus.

How delightful that confidence wherewith we might ask that blessing which is pre-eminently termed the promise of the Father, even the Holy Spirit—might ask the presence and operation of this heavenly visitant from Him all of whose promises in Christ are yea and amen! O seal us thus, and stablish us thus, even by the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts—the earnest of that heaven where Christ hath gone to provide for us an everlasting habitation, and so is not only preparing a place for us, but us for the place. Give us this anointing, O God—the unction that remaineth.

CHALMERS.

Eighth.

Morning. Ps. lvii.

Evening. 2 Cor. ii.

"WHOM the Lord loveth he chasteneth."

"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ."

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

Deem not that they are blest alone
Whose lives a peaceful tenor keep;
For God, who pities man, has shown
A blessing for the eyes that weep.

The light of smiles shall fill again
The lids that overflow with tears;
And weary hours of woe and pain
Are promises of happier years.

There is a day of sunny rest
For every dark and troubled night;
Though grief may bide an evening guest,
Yet joy shall come with early light.

Nor let the good man's trust depart,
Though life its common gifts deny,—
Though with a pierced and broken heart,
And spurned of men, he goes to die.

For God has marked each sorrowing day,
And numbered every secret tear;
And heaven's eternal bliss shall pay
For all his children suffer here.

BRYANT.

Ninth.

Morning. Ps. lviii.

Evening. 2 Cor. iii.

O THOU who art a Spirit, who only can be worshipped in spirit and in truth, teach me the way of spiritual excellence, that I may be enabled to draw nearer unto Thee, and to live the more to Thine acceptance. Assist me, Heavenly Father, to lift my eyes from self and its inconsistencies, from my heart with its vileness, up to the pure image and example of the Savior.

May I ever remember that the contemplation of sin, even that we may the more heartily hate and detest it, is of very questionable benefit! Thou art of purer eyes than to look upon transgression, and Thou hast bid us turn away from self to Thee. Thou hast taught us to lift our eyes to heaven, and behold its glory and excellence; but above all, Thou hast given us Jesus to dwell in our midst, that He might be our great and perpetual Example—that, following after Him, we might be led to holiness of heart.

And now, O God of grace and goodness, at this hour of prayer, grant that we all, "beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, may be changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Tenth.

Morning. Ps. lix.

Evening. 2 Cor. iv.

SOUL, when the heat and burden of life are upon thee, and thou art weary with its toil, when its trials and disappointments overbear thy heart with sorrow, and fill thine eyes with tears, O faint not, nor cease thy struggles; but bethink thee that thus was the Savior, and thus have all His children ever been tried and chastened. Bethink thee, as each trial passes by, there is one less for thee to meet and endure. It can never return again. Though others may visit thee, the end will come at length, when temptation, trial, and sin no more can touch the heart to sadness, or the eyes to tears.

Then shalt thou comprehend more fully the mystery of life's great discipline of suffering. Then shalt thou know what a blessed thing it is to endure to the end. Then shalt thou see what thou dost now so unwillingly believe—that "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

O repine not, murmur not; for thou canst not see the immortal blessings that follow earthly trials. Endure in patience, for it is a God of wisdom that tempereth life's vicissitudes.

Eleventh.

Morning. Ps. lx.

Evening. 2 Cor. v.

LORD GOD of our never-dying spirits, who hast made us all we are, who, from Thyself, hast breathed into us the breath of immortality, I bless Thy Name that I am permitted to look away from this world of mutation and uncertainty, to a changeless, fadeless world of light, and joy, and happiness, in the hope and the assurance that when this earthly house shall be dissolved, "we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

Comfort Thou my soul with these blessed hopes, and make me stronger for faith, and prayer, and daily duty. Inasmuch as I would live in the hope to dwell with my Redeemer evermore, O may I be enabled to draw near to Him in heart, and live hereafter more in His immediate presence—that He may dwell more fully in my spirit.

Take me, and my Beloved Associate, at this hour of prayer, to a sacred and satisfying nearness to Thyself. Open to our spiritual perception and enjoyment, the more hidden nature of a life of godliness. May we be Thine in all that constitutes a child of God and an heir of immortality! Associate, may *we* truly be the children of the kingdom!

Twelfth.

Morning. Ps. lxi. Evening. 2 Cor. vi.

O THOU who hast promised to be a Father unto all that love and serve Thee, oppressed with a sense of my weakness, my sinfulness, and my unfaithfulness, I bow before the mercy-seat, hopeless but in Thine unbounded compassion. I present before Thee the thoughts and actions of another day. I would not that they should pass to the record-book of heaven untouched with Thy forgiving grace. Angel of Mercy, remember me to-night!

If I have been enabled to do one deed of goodness, or think one pure and holy thought, if I have done aught with which Thou art pleased, such would I bring before Thee now, and offer with a thankful heart to Thine acceptance. Though it be unworthy, utterly unworthy, yet for Jesus' sake accept, and for His sake forgive this day's shortcomings.

But if, O Compassionate Father, I have this day fallen into transgression, wilt Thou be merciful to me, a sinner? for, in Christ, Thou canst be just and yet forgive. In the plenitude of Thy loving-kindness, blot out, for His sake, the record of this day's errors, and give me greater strength henceforth, that I may walk nearer Thee.

Thirteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxii. Evening. 2 Cor. vii.

"As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God."

How long, how long, O my God, ere I may taste the full cup of salvation! How long ere I may be fully clothed upon with the heavenly! My soul doth long to leave this changeful, weary, sinful world, and rest in Him who is the abode and Center of all holiness and excellence.

I come to Thee, O Father! Take me to Thyself, and give me, even now, to feel that, though I see Thee not, I am Thine.

As a solitary star, lost and wandering through the pathless firmament of darkness, so doth my soul wander when away from Thee, its Center, its Light, its All.

Thou that ever hearest the supplication of the needy and the penitent, O wilt Thou unveil Thy glory to my longing spirit! O wilt Thou give to me and my Associates a new and a richer baptism of Thy regenerating love, till self and earth be lost, and heaven alone be cognizant to our translated souls! May this be an evening prayer of unwonted access to the throne of grace!

Fourteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxiii. Evening. 2 Cor. viii.

"I GIVE thanks, to-night, for the assurance that, amid much that is perplexing and uncertain in our pilgrimage through this sin-stained world, the 'work of righteousness is peace.'

If we love God purely and serve Him cheerfully, what can harm us? Has He not promised to be as a sun and as a shield; to give grace and glory; and to withhold no good thing? Yea, and to do for us far more abundantly than we can think or desire? If He provide for us, what more can we ask or wish?

Though often the way seems dark and clouded, and though, like the disciples on the sea, we are filled with terror, yet comes there ever that same soft whisper, 'Peace'—calming the waves, and bidding our fears to cease. Is it not a blessed privilege to know God, not alone as bearing in His hand the just balance, but as offering to us the olive-branch, assuring us of hope and mercy? God has *not* forgotten to be gracious, and, in due time, if we faint not, shall we be filled with all His communicable fullness. Bring near to us all, O Thou Everlasting One, Thy righteousness, and let not Thy salvation tarry."

Fifteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxiv.

Evening. 2 Cor. ix.

If he that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly, if happiness hereafter is to be proportionate to the seed of righteousness sown in this life, verily, have I not then occasion to be alarmed lest I reap but disappointment and sorrow? Would that I might, with all the powers within me, scatter right and left the seed of the kingdom, wherever I might find opportunity.

Thy promise is, that, "he which soweth bountifully shall reap bountifully," and Thy grace is ever nigh to strengthen us, and to water that which we have scattered. May I not mistrust its freedom or its bounty, nor hesitate to demand largely of its blessings.

Give unto me, O Lord who dost know our hearts, give unto me more of a spirit of obedience and faith, and more of the grace of diligence. The little that is left to me of life, can I not truly say, I would have filled with a more unhesitating, cheerful, and unvarying compliance with all Thy mind. Let me not say here or there, but, wheresoever Thou wilt—not to-morrow or at some convenient season, but whensoever the Master saith, then will I labor.

Sixteenth.

Morning. Pa. lxv. Evening. 2 Cor. x.

THERE is a pernicious tendency among Christians to measure themselves by one another. Setting before our minds the common standard of Christianity, we rest at ease, regarding ourselves complacently whenever we attain, in some good degree, to that excellence. Our only thought is, how do others do —what is expected of us?

If we are as regular, as prompt, as liberal as those of our circumstances, we concern ourselves little how all this may appear to God. We turn away from the Great Example He has given us, the Holy One, the Sinless, and the Just, to compare ourselves with a fellow-mortal, fallen, lost, and ruined, lulling ourselves to security because we are but little worse than he.

Disenthral me, O God of wisdom and grace, from this pernicious influence of fashion and example. May man's judgment be naught, but the approbation of my conscience and Thy Spirit be all in all.

O my blessed Savior, may I attain to that holiness of heart which shall measure all things by Thy Spirit, meet its full approval, and win Thy constant Presence.

Seventeenth.

Morning. Ps. lxvi.

Evening. 2 Cor. xi. 1-15.

SHOW unto me, O God, the true estate of my soul, and make me to know the things that are freely given of God; and deliver me, gracious Lord, from all those offences that provoke thee to hide thy face from me, and that wrap up my soul in clouds and darkness, and make me so much a stranger to peace and comfort. O grant me a clear discovery of the evidences of my calling and election; and seal a comfortable assurance of thy blessed love in Christ Jesus to my soul.

O Thou who didst bid the winds and waves, Peace, be still, and they obeyed thee—settle my discomposed mind, and quiet my troubled breast, and bring me to see the light of thy countenance and the joy of thy salvation. Be pleased to establish my heart with grace, and let me be rooted and grounded in the faith.

Rejoice the soul of thy servant; for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul; and let the joy of the Lord be my strength, to make me victorious over my sins, and always to abound in thy work; never pleased so much with anything as to do the things pleasing to my God through Jesus Christ.

PRIVATE DEVOTION.

Eighteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxvii.

Evening. 2 Cor. xi. 16.

O WHAT a humbling representation is here set forth of the labors and trials of this great apostle! Let me take the lesson to myself, and contrast the picture here given with my own selfishness, my own love of ease, my own impatience under the crosses and contradictions to which I am exposed; how ready to sink under discouragements, and to faint when aught that is adverse or annoying befalls me.

There was a substratum of piety and prayer to sustain all the toils, and burdens, and endurances which were laid on this manful and intrepid warrior in the cause of God—who fought the good fight and kept the faith.

So be it with me, Almighty Father; and let me experience the truth of that saying that "they who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint." What was it that enabled Paul to say, "I can do all things"? The glorious and instructive answer is, "through Christ strengthening me." O may He, the Lord my righteousness, be also the Lord my strength!

CHALMERS.

Nineteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxviii. 1-17. Evening. 2 Cor. xii.

We have little whereof to glory, for all is of Thine unmerited grace. Though Thou dost oftentimes try our souls as in a refiner's fire, yet dost Thou sometimes, also, lift us up, like Paul, to the third heaven. In all this varied experience and discipline, may we see the Hand of Wisdom and Goodness, moulding our souls for a higher, a holier existence.

When worldly prosperity greets us with its lavish favors, when faithful friendship takes us by the hand, at every turn, to stroll through shady groves and verdant meadows, when affection opens to our hearts earth's purest, holiest paradise, and bids us repose in the bosom of the loved, when we walk forth with a spirit at peace with Thee, as in the light and smile of Heaven, may we ever feel that all, all is of Thy rich and boundless grace.

"O! to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!
Let thy goodness, like a fetter,
Bind my wand'ring heart to thee:
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it—
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it;
Seal it for thy courts above."

Twentieth.

Morning. Ps. lxviii. 18.

Evening. 2 Cor. xiii.

THERE are few duties, from the neglect of which I suffer more, than that to which the apostle here exhorts his Christian brethren. No exercise is more needful to the soul, and yet, often more unpleasant, than deep, sincere, thorough self-examination. It brings to light sinful practices that we have loved, and excused, while we have felt they were wrong. It exposes the insincerity of many prayers, "lead us not into temptation," which we have not dared omit, while we have purposed to repeat the transgression. It humiliates us in our guilt and falsity. Yet these are the smitings of a friend. It is a thousand-fold better for us to be humiliated than to continue in sin, vainly dreaming it is hidden. Why should we shut our eyes to what we know God must see?

Often will I, in faithful honesty to my soul's best good, devote myself to a true and earnest search within my own heart. Let me not do it hastily or superficially, but with the desire to see as the Eye of Omniscience sees, and to judge as He will judge. So let us, Associates, at this hour, aided by the Lamp of Truth, search those hearts whence are the issues of life.

Twenty-first.

Morning. Ps. lxix. 1-17. Evening. Gal. i.

THE manner in which a knowledge of the Gospel was bestowed upon Paul, who neither received it of man, nor was taught but by the revelation of Jesus Christ, should instruct us, also, to draw our wisdom direct from the great Fountain Head. The great truths of personal redemption, growth in grace, holiness of heart, and consecration to God, are not in fleshly wisdom. They can only be learned by the meek and penitent, at the foot of the Cross.

It avails us nothing to confer with flesh and blood. We but darken counsel with words. There are many experiences within us, which all human knowledge cannot unfold or fathom. Yet are they none the less true, because beyond our philosophy. We only know they are, not knowing why or whence.

While we would not depreciate the opinions of our fellow-man, yet let us seek to be guided less by their experience than by the direct teachings of Christ. Let us learn that when we bring a pure heart and a deliberate judgment to the place of prayer, asking wisdom, then are we most truly wise. Let us ask of Him who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not—but let us ask in faith, doubting not.

Twenty-Second.

Morning. Ps. lxix. 18. Evening. Gal. ii.

DISSIMULATION! Christian, hast *thou* none of it? If even Peter and Barnabas were carried away, through fear of man, to hypocrisy, may not its taint have touched *our* hearts? Is our Christian character at home as spotless as we would make it appear abroad? Are we as upright before ourselves and our God as we would appear unto men? Do we never do in public, merely to preserve our reputation, many things which we omit in private? Do we never engage, in private, in those practices which we dare not avow? Do we never dwell upon thoughts and imaginations which, were they known, would cause our heads to hang with shame and confusion? Do we never indulge in transgression, and frame false excuses to the world?

O Dearly-loved Associate, are not our hearts often deeply and bitterly pained with a sense of these inconsistencies? And is this not, too often, the true cause of Christian weakness?

O Thou that dost pity and canst aid, assist us, that henceforth we may know no thoughts, no purposes, no wishes, no pleasures, but those which Thou wilt bless and hallow with Thy Presence.

Twenty-Third.

Morning. Ps. lxx. Evening. Gal. iii.

GREAT is the mystery of godliness. The just shall live by faith; but how quickly and how imperceptibly, in an unguarded moment, do our feet slide away from the path of rectitude! Ere we are aware, sin has insidiously wound its way into our hearts. Vain is the strength of man, vain our trust in an arm of flesh, vain our reliance upon our own hearts. In Christ alone are we safe.

"I want a principle within,
Of jealous, godly fear;
A sensibility of sin,—
A pain to feel it near:
I want the first approach to feel,
Of pride, or fond desire;
To catch the wand'ring of my will,
And quench the kindling fire.

If to the right or left I stray,
That moment, Lord, reprove;
And let me weep my life away,
For having grieved thy love.
O may the least omission pain
My well-instructed soul,
And drive me to the blood again
Which makes the wounded whole!"

Twenty-fourth.

Morning. Ps. lxxi. 1-18. Evening. Gal. iv.

BLESSED AND HEAVENLY FATHER, Thy Goodness is as incomprehensible to our feeble and fallen natures, as is Thy Power and Glory. We are lost in the exhibitions of Thy tender regard for such creatures as we are.

Ever wandering from those paths where Thou hast planted peace and blessing, ever forgetting it is Thy Hand which bestows all that life has of enjoyment, ever seeking for that which Thy wisdom discerns to be evil, yet doth Thy kindness hold us still; yet doth Thy mercy spare, and Thy goodness restrain and seek to lead us back again to Thyself.

The consciousness, the bitter, heartfelt consciousness, of perverseness, deep down within our hearts, would not permit us so much as to lift our eyes to heaven, hadst Thou not, O Compassionate Creator, been pleased to reveal Thyself as "Our Father in Heaven," more willing to forgive and bless than earthly parents are.

O give me that filial love and obedience which will enable me to receive within my heart, in large and satisfying measure, the spirit of adoption. This do I desire at this hour. Bestow it upon us all.

Twenty-Fifth.

Morning. Ps. lxxi. 14.

Evening. Gal. v.

THERE is much of practical worth here. If we profess to be of the Spirit, we ought to *walk in the Spirit.* Now the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.

Associate, as we read these, how are we oppressed with a sense of the almost utter barrenness of our souls! How often is it that the spirit of love is so feeble within us that it is entirely overcome, and we are controlled by a spirit of hatred! How often does some trivial occurrence banish all joy and peace, and leave us only discontent and unhappiness! How frequently and how painfully are we conscious, that, instead of long-suffering and gentleness, impatience and fretfulness rule within at the slightest provocation! How has it been with me to-day? Have I sought the fruit of the Spirit?

Yet let us not misapprehend. The fruit cometh not in its perfectness in seed-time nor summer, neither without constant care and labor. Yet will He who giveth increase, if we labor still in patient hope, perfect His own, though our faith be as a grain of mustard-seed.

Twenty-Sixth.

Morning. Ps. lxxii. Evening. Gal. vi.

THERE is, throughout the whole of this chapter, such an entirely different spirit from that selfish isolation which pervades most Christian communities, that we shall do well, Associates, to examine our hearts diligently, and to re-read these precious exhortations, and seek to imbibe somewhat of this enlarged benevolence and sympathy.

When one is overtaken in a fault, rather than seeking to restore, do we not more frequently condemn in our hearts, and "pass by on the other side"? Do we seek to bear one another's burdens, and as we have opportunity, to do good unto all men? Have we noted this "*especially*" in our sympathies, our preferences, our favors, and made this *especial* discrimination between the household of faith and the world? Is there not here a great and culpable negligence among Christians? Do we strive to assist one another, as brethren of one household? Do we extend to our fellow-pilgrims that hand of warm and heartfelt friendship which Jesus gives to us, and would have us offer to His brethren?

Let us remember that Christ taught us that whosoever did His will, was His brother and His sister.

Twenty-Seventh.

Morning. Ps. lxxiii. 1-15. Evening. Eph. i.

How sweet, when day is done, when gentle night comes brooding o'er a weary world, ere sleep invites our throbbing brow to downy pillows, and lulls our spirits to forgetfulness, how sweet to bow in silent, secret prayer, and rest the soul on God!

What a calm and holy quiet reigns within our souls, and how do our anxious cares and tormenting fears, as we say "Thy will be done," seem to rest, as if obedient to the Master's voice, "Peace, be still!"

And when, in childlike confidence, we bring the toils and duties of the day, its errors and omissions, and lay them, in penitence and hope, at the feet of a Redeemer compassionate and merciful, how it wipes away all tears, and atones for all earth's sorrows, to hear the Father bid us come and share His love and rest in His forgiving bosom! How heavenly then to fold the hands to sleep, and there to rest; and when morning's silver-pinioned messengers come knocking at the windows of the soul, bidding us hasten on our pilgrimage, O how blessed to depart with the Father's Benediction resting on us!

Twenty-Eighth.

Morning. Ps. lxxiii. 16. Evening. Eph. ii.

HEAVENLY FATHER, rich in Thy mercy and the great love wherewith Thou hast loved us, at this hour of prayer, aid Thou us that we may so have faith in that blood of Christ by which we are brought nigh unto Thee, that we shall be able to recognize Thy Spirit, and be assured of our acceptance and adoption. May this be an occasion of especial heart-searching and consecration, to all Associates. May we bring to the altar of sacrifice, not the little we are wont, but all, and there make a full rendition to our Heavenly Father.

Blessed Savior, wilt Thou meet us, and teach us how to pray, what to offer, and how to confess our errors? Yea, wilt Thou bear our petitions in Thine own Name to Him to whom we would be re-consecrated?

Wash us anew, and free us from the taints of sin; break off the fetters wherewith the vanities and pleasures of the world have shackled us, and so baptize us with Thy Spirit, that all the toils and sorrows of life may be lost in the coming peace and rest; and our souls be lifted up to sit together, with Thee, in heavenly places.

Twenty-Ninth.

Morning. Ps. lxxiv. 1-10. Evening. Eph. iii.

ASSOCIATES, as we bow before our Heavenly Father, let us offer for each other this prayer of Paul for his brethren, "That He will grant *us*, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in *our* hearts by faith; that we, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we might be filled with all the fullness of God."

And now, O compassionate Father, at the close of another day remember us in Thy great mercy, for we are but shadows. For Christ's sake freely forgive us, freely love us, and freely bestow the spirit of penitence, of wisdom, and obedience.

Remember with us, all the loved. Permit none of us ever to depart from Thy ways, but enable us continually to walk in newness of life that, in heaven, robed in white, we may walk with Jesus. To Thy guardian care we now commend ourselves, our all. Bring us safely through the night, and with the returning light illuminate our souls.

Thirtieth.

Morning. Ps. lxxiv. 11. Evening. Eph. iv.

THESE frequently recurring admonitions as to our conversation, point very significantly to one of the weaknesses of our nature. Nor are there many whose bitter regrets, and often secret tears, do not give a sad attestation of its truthfulness. But neither regrets nor tears can always heal the wounded spirit.

O how many sad and heavy hours do we reap from words of thoughtlessness or unkindness! How often would we recall some hasty word uttered under provocation, that went stinging to the heart, and perchance lies there rankling still!

How often have thoughtless or imbittered words sunk down into our own bosoms, touching the deepest springs of sadness, and bringing up gushing tears of sorrow! And how have words of sympathy and kindness, ofttimes, brought as in a moment, sunshine and gladness in the midst of clouds and darkness.

Words are little things, but to all the heart holds dear of peace, and joy, or love, are fraught with messages of life and death. May they ever go from our lips, even as the words of Jesus, with kindness, sincerity, and blessing.

Of Daily Self-Examination.

BISHOP TAYLOR.

He that will die well and happily, must dress his soul by a diligent and frequent scrutiny; he must perfectly understand and watch the state of his soul.

1. By a daily examination of our actions, we shall the easier cure a great sin, and prevent its arrival to become habitual.

2. For many days do not pass the best persons in which they have not many idle words or vainer thoughts to sully the fair whiteness of their souls.

3. A frequent examination of our actions will intenerate and soften our consciences.

4. A frequent examination of the smallest parts of our lives is the best instrument to make our repentance particular, and a fit remedy to all the members of the whole body of sin.

5. If we decline or refuse to call ourselves frequently to account, and to use daily advices concerning the state of our souls, it is a very ill sign that our souls are not right with God, or that they do not dwell in religion. But this I shall say, that they who do use this exercise frequently, will make their consciences much at ease.

OCTOBER

First.

Morning. Ps. lxxv.

Evening. Eph. v.

O FLEETING, fleeting Time, how noiselessly yet how swiftly, on thy silken wings dost thou bear us onward, we know not whither! Nor day nor night dost thou tarry. From the moment the new-born spirit first looks upon this lower world, thou dost ever urge him on his resistless way, as if in haste to gather him to his tomb. The soul hath never rest but in ignorance and sloth, its dark and silent sepulchre, ever undisturbed.

On every hand it sees priceless gems of truth and wisdom, which it may gather to bestud its coronet of victory; fadeless flowers of kindness and affection, wherewith to wreathe garlands of immortal pleasure; seeds of virtue, purity, and holiness which shall

bloom perennial in the garden-vales of Paradise; but Time stops not that we may dally. They are ours, if we will reach forth and pluck them as we pass. A moment's idleness and they are gone, and gone forever. Once past, how bright and beautiful soever, no moment ever comes when we may turn back for what was left unculled.

Fondly dreaming, in their swift and incessant flitting by, it will be ours to gather them in fancy's slow and careless hours; we see not that, as gently as Time has touched April's early blossoms, and ripened Summer's waving burdens, and now is dropping down the fading Autumn leaves, so gently will he touch the bloom of youth, and scatter from our foreheads, life's faded foliage, and, in a moment all unlooked for, bid us lay aside life's implements of toil, and turn away from all its warm affections and robe ourselves for the sepulchre.

Soul, so seek to gather, daily, of life's immortal treasures, that, when thou standest at the gate beyond which mortality cannot pass, disrobed of earth's habiliments, attendant angels discerning, in the casket of thy heart, jewels for the Lord of Glory, shall robe thee in His spotless garments, and bid thee welcome to His Presence and the unending bliss of Paradise.

Second.

Morning. Ps. lxxvi.

Evening. Eph. vi.

ASSOCIATE, often remembered and dearly loved, wilt thou meet me at this evening prayer at the mercy-seat? Would I might hear thy voice assuring me that thou art still seeking to walk in the ways of holiness! Hast thou, in all these days, constantly been striving to live an unseen spirit-life with the Savior? Hast thou ever been girt about with truth, and borne the shield of faith, the breastplate of righteousness, and the helmet of salvation? Then let us bless Him who is our Strength, that, hitherto, He hath helped us.

O beloved and cherished Fellow Pilgrim, never before have we been so near the land of the blessed! We have many a league the less to travel; the end draws on apace. Will it be ours to meet each other in that sinless land? Shall we be permitted to take each other by the hand, and say, "We are in heaven"? O blessed hope of an immortality with the holy! May Jesus be *thy* constant guide, *thy* comfort, *thy* consolation in all life's journey, and *thy* Rest in Heaven! May attendant angels watch around thee now, and preserve thee in thy slumbers till the morning light!

Third.

Morning. Ps. lxxvii. Evening. Phil. i.

THIS, too, is a most precious epistle. May its opening benediction of grace and peace be abundantly fulfilled on me—and that both from the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, with whom may I be admitted to close and confiding fellowship. Teach me, O God, the same affectionate concern in the Christianity of others which the Apostle Paul had; and O may his prayer in behalf of his disciples be realized upon myself. Begin the good work of grace in my heart, and carry it onward to a full performance. Shed abroad in my heart the love of God; and let mine be an intelligent affection for the things that are above.

Fill me, O God, with the fruits of righteousness; and let me ever keep by Jesus Christ, who is the germinating principle of them all, and by God, whose glory is the end of all. And O that Christ and the advancement of His kingdom were the great objects of my existence, and of all my doings. O God, let my work here, and the time of my departure hence, be not as I will but as Thou wilt.

CHALMERS.

Fourth.

Morning. Ps. lxxviii. 1-25.

Evening. Phil. ii.

MAY there be within me more of the mind of Christ. There is yet, after all my strivings, a selfishness which insinuates itself into all my thoughts and purposes. Christ took upon Himself the form of a servant, that He might work out for us the great problem of the compatibility of sparing Mercy and inexorable Justice. And after He had risen in glory from its accomplishment, He gave to us the great commandment to spread the blessed tidings to all the world.

Thus has He spoken to me, and to each of His disciples. What has been the response of my life to this charge? Has it been my meat and drink to do His will, as it was His meat and drink to do His Father's? Have I sought daily to let my light shine, to preach Christ, by walking daily in His footsteps? Have I been a living epistle to His praise?

At the close of another day, as I recall its thoughts, and words, and deeds, can I come to my Savior, feeling that I have striven, in my example, to set forth the Redeemer of the world? O that I were a better Christian, a more consistent disciple!

Fifth.

Morning. Ps. lxxviii. 36–40.

Evening. Phil. iii.

"LET us walk by the same rule."

As it is reasonable to suppose that every good man has entered into, or at least proposed to himself some method of holy living, and set himself some such rules to observe as are not common to other people, and only known to himself; so it should be a constant part of his evening recollection, to examine how, and in what degree, he has observed them, and to reproach himself before God for every neglect.

Now as good rules relating to all these things, are certain means of great improvement, and such as all serious Christians must needs propose to themselves, so they will hardly ever be observed to any purpose, unless they are made the constant subject of our evening examination.

An evening repentance which thus brings all the actions of the day to account, is not only necessary to wipe off the guilt of sin, but is also the most certain way to amend and perfect our lives. For it is only such a repentance as this that touches the heart, awakens the conscience, and leaves a horror and detestation of sin upon the mind.

LAW.

Sixth.

Morning. Ps. lxxviii. 41–54. Evening. Phil. iv.

"CONTINUE in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving."

If we are truly the children of that God whose is the earth and the fullness thereof; if His hand is over us, to mete out to us all the vicissitudes of life; if, in the consciousness of loving Him, we may also receive the guaranty that all things work together for our good, why should we not rejoice always, regardless of the circumstances and condition of life? Why should we give ourselves to care and anxiety, to solicitude for the future, to forebodings of coming evil?

I would learn, with Paul, having made known unto God my requests, to be careful for nothing—to rest all with Him—to seek for that eminent Christian grace, "contentment in whatsoever state I am."

It is not external circumstances that give us worth in the world. We are capable of doing most where God has placed us. When our heart is at peace with Him for what He has given, and what withheld, then indeed can we do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us. Yea, may I not forget that it is only in Christ and through Christ that I am to be strengthened!

Seventh.

Morning. Ps. lxxviii. 65.

Evening. Col. i. 1-20.

OUR Father who art in Heaven, who hast given us Jesus, Thy Son, to be a propitiation for our sins, shed abroad upon our hearts, through Thy goodness and mercy, the gracious influences of His death and intercession. Fill us with the hopes, the encouragements of those that feel they are brought nigh unto Thee through His most precious blood.

O Lamb of God, meet us now at the Mercy Seat, and sprinkle our penitent souls with the blood of cleansing, that, though we be not worthy, yet in Thine exceeding worthiness, we may have strength to lift our eyes to Heaven and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

I feel my own weakness, my unworthiness, the utter sinfulness of my nature; and if Thou, O Lord, art not merciful, no hope is left for me. But forasmuch as Thou hast so loved us as to make Thy Son an offering for us, my soul can come and believe that Thy mercies reach even unto me; and that I, even I, may have redemption through His blood, and be made meet to have part in the first resurrection. Sprinkle me and my Associate, while we kneel before Thee now, merciful and all-atoning Redeemer.

Eighth.

Morning. Ps. lxxix.

Evening. Col. i. 21.

"If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel."

That steadfastness which must underlie all success, is doubly needful in attaining eminence in Religion. To this end, it is necessary that it be based not upon one faculty, or one class of faculties; but upon the entirety of our being. Those who find the comforts of religion only in strongly excited emotions, must always suffer from inconstancy and irregularity; for, in their nature, the emotions, like the sea, must have their storm and calm; while those who worship only at the shrine of reason, must ever be denied the beatific visions of that exceeding glory wherewith heaven is robed to him who looks up through tears of penitence and love. I would seek to bring to this work of serving my Maker, my entire intellectual and spiritual being.

God of my existence, assist me to consecrate to Thee all my faculties and capabilities, that I may not suffer from the want of their proper influence in keeping me in the path of rectitude and obedience. And wilt Thou keep me, in every circumstance of life, *steadfast unto Thee.*

Ninth.

Morning. Ps. lxxx.

Evening. Col. ii.

THE present is but a shadow of the things to come. In Thee, and in Thee alone, are the treasures of wisdom. I would learn the pure, the essential, the immortal truth. This is found alone in Thee, the Source whence all things emanate. And how shall my ignorant and inexperienced soul discern between the true and the seeming? I come to Thee, O Thou who art the Light of the Universe, seeking to imbibe within my darkened spirit some rays of truth.

When, a few days passed, I enter that world of spirit realities, of all that I have learned and done in time, how little will remain as truth! how much will have passed away of that I now deem so essential to life and its happiness!

Touch Thou my intellect, that it may discern Thee and the impress of Thy Hand; and my heart, that it may instinctively incline to all wherein Thy Spirit dwells. Yea, O Lord, confer upon me, in abundant measure, that wisdom which cometh from above; even a saving knowledge of Thyself and Thy Son Jesus Christ, and those riches which perish not with the using.

Tenth.

Morning. Ps. lxxxi.

Evening. Col. iii.

WHAT an enlarged heart of tenderness and sympathy does this chapter set forth to us for imitation! How thankfully ought we to read this Scripture!

Associates, as we read, let us more fully weigh these exhortations in connection with our own thoughts and practices. Looking into our hearts, and discerning what are the chief objects of pursuit and regard, can we say that our affections are set on things above? Do they not more tenaciously cling to things on the earth? Do we not think much more of, strive much more and long much more for, earthly enjoyments than heavenly? Can we recount these evil deeds here mentioned, and say they have no longer a place within our hearts? In putting off the old man, did we fully put off his evil deeds? and in putting on the new, did we put on all these virtues and excellencies? Have we, in truth, put off these evils, or only so professed?

And above all, have we put on that Charity which is the bond of perfectness? These graces of the spirit flourish only in the gardens of the upright, fanned by the breath of prayer, and watered by the dews of heaven.

Eleventh.

Morning. Ps. lxxxii. Evening. Col. iv.

O ADORABLE SAVIOR! Thou who wast once Thyself a pilgrim—the lonely, weary, harmless, afflicted one—who hadst often no arm to lean upon, and no voice to cheer Thee—an outcast, wanderer, and sojourner in Thine own creation—I rejoice to think that Thou hast trodden all this wilderness before me—that Thou knowest its dreariest paths.

I take comfort in the assurance that there is at the right hand of the Majesty on high, a Fellow Sufferer, who has drunk of every "brook in the way"—shed every tear of earthly sorrow—heaved every sigh of earthly suffering—and who, being Himself the tried and tempted One, is able and willing to succor every pilgrim who is tried and tempted too.

I beseech Thee, at this hour, to look down in great kindness on all my beloved friends. Seal to them a saving interest in Thy great salvation. Wash them all by Thy Spirit. May not one be wanting on the day when Thou makest up Thy jewels! Make us more self-sacrificing, more heavenly-minded, more Savior-like.

MORNING WATCHES.

Twelfth.

Morning. Ps. lxxxiii.

Evening. 1 Thes. i.

In the ceaseless change and wreck of time, when many of our cherished plans of happiness have failed, many earnest labors of love have seemingly wrought out no good; when our own counsels have availed nothing, and our wisdom shown itself but foolishness; when many of those whose voices came to us like cheering music, are silent in distance or in darkness, how it encourages the heart in its loneliness, and stirs it to the warm pulsations of a newer life, to know that, at the hour of secret prayer, we are not forgotten—that our humble name is sometimes borne to Heaven on faithful friendship's supplications!

O loved and faithful Friends, though we may see each other in the flesh no more, yet may we often, at the quiet twilight hour, meet in spirit, and, in sweet communion, wing our upward way to the throne of grace and mercy. And when long years have gone, and many friends been gathered home, may our place of evening prayer still be to us the shrine of Friendship and the Gate of Heaven! May blessings be upon you all to-night, loved and absent friends!

Thirteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxxxiv. Evening. 1 Thes. ii.

ASSOCIATES, are there those of whom we can say, "*ye* are the crown of *my* rejoicing"?

From all the opportunities wherein I might gather stars to gem my crown, have I gathered so much as one? Are there no precious souls around me, still without hope and God in the world, whom I may pluck as brands from the burning? Are there none of my friends, to whom, I may venture a word of counsel? Are there not, indeed, on every side, those whose hearts may long for the hopes and joys of the child of God, whom Satan still holds in the chains of sin? Are there not many who look to me for counsel, and wonder at my silence? Verily, if my crown be starless, it will not be that there were none to gather.

Associates, let this thought sink deeply into all our hearts this evening; there are those daily with us, whom, perchance, by earnest, faithful labor, we may turn from the way of error to the way of life, and gather home to the endless joy of heaven. O would it not be worth the labor of a lifetime, if each of us might lead one to the land of rest? God will not leave such efforts unrewarded.

Fourteenth.

Morning. Pa. lxxxv. Evening. 1 Thes. iii.

O THOU who art the light of the straying and the strength of the feeble, strengthen me for a more earnest and faithful labor. I would do good in Thy Name, but an overweening sensitiveness to censure or ridicule often stands as a lion in my path. I would honor Thee in my life, yet do I ever shrink from standing forth that my example may be known and read of all men. I would aid in bringing forward the kingdom of Thy grace and glory, yet do my resolutions ever fail of accomplishment, and my plans and schemes all end only in purpose.

Blessed Redeemer, who dost know my weaknesses, I come and cast myself on Thee, praying for that strength which I need to accomplish what I resolve. O Lord, Thou art my only hope. Wilt Thou come within my heart, and abiding there, make me a more worthy member of Thy household? I am ashamed to lift up my face before Thee. Forgive me, Merciful Father, and aid me henceforth to labor more faithfully, to pray more earnestly, and to walk more circumspectly. Renew my heart in this evening worship, that, to-morrow I may go on my Zionward way more worthy of Thine approbation.

Fifteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxxxvi. Evening. 1 Thes. iv.

In an humble acknowledgment of my manifold sins and iniquities, which I from time to time, and more especially this day, have committed against Thee, both in thought, word, and deed, I now prostrate myself before Thee, O Lord of heaven and earth, beseeching Thee, for the sake of Jesus Christ, my only Lord and Savior, to be merciful unto me.

Forgive me, O Lord, that I have not rendered unto thee according to thy mercy and loving-kindness; that I have been forgetful and disobedient, and have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight. Let thy Holy Spirit sanctify me throughout, and give me more and more grace and strength, whereby I may be enabled to subdue all my sinful and corrupt affections; grant that I may improve the remainder of my days with all possible care, and give all diligence to make my calling and election sure; that I may so persevere therein unto death, that at last I may attain unto everlasting life. Accept my praises and thanksgivings for all thy mercies vouchsafed me in this life, and the hopes of a better in the world to come.

Private Devotion.

Sixteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxxxvii. Evening. 1 Thes. v.

"ABSTAIN from the very appearance of evil."

Thou, O Lord, hast set forth as an example of Thy Truth, and a perpetual attestation of its purifying efficacy, every one who has felt its renovating power on his own soul. Thou hast bid us let our light shine that others may see; thus inviting the world to look and learn of Christ through us. As He lived above reproach, so are we called to live above even the appearance of evil. What watchfulness, what constant vigilance, does this necessitate, that no act or word of ours may seem to lean toward transgression, especially since our judgments are so imperfect, and our consciences so weak—our love of the world so overpowering, and our whole nature so prone.

Henceforth, O Lord, sustained by Divine Grace, will I strive to lead a life of greater circumspection; ever seeking to remember Thine eye and the eye of a gainsaying world is upon me. O Spotless Lamb, be Thou ever with me, in all my thoughts, and so instruct and lead me, that throughout life, I may be attaining more and more to Thy perfect purity and holiness!

Seventeenth.

Morning. Ps. lxxxviii. Evening. 2 Thes. i.

THE ingathering of Winter's store, and the fading beauty of Summer's dying garniture, though they teach the heart sad and mournful lessons of human frailty and decay, bring to the spirit-pilgrim no drear and chill monitions of the hasting tomb. To his ear, the lone monotone of the Autumn wind sings never so sweetly, as when, bearing the lifeless leaves before its resistless blasts, it seems to say, Thus, mortal, is Time hurrying thee away from life to the Unseen, beyond.

It teaches him anew that this weary pilgrimage is hasting to its end—that the Better Country draweth near; and he turns his longing eyes again if he may more clearly see those bright hill-tops, smiling in the irradiant light of Heaven. O blessed Land of rest, of joy, and peace! When will it be mine to tread its sinless shores!

Though, in these bare and leafless branches, I read that thus shall we be stripped of all that life may boast of strength and beauty, yet it is no unwelcome lesson to the soul; for it doth whisper of a weary, toilsome life of sin hasting to its final end, and of an immortality of bliss.

Eighteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxxxix. 1-18.

Evening. 2 Thes. ii.

THOU, O LORD, art my Comfort. Thy favor is better than life. When Thou art with me, all is light, and peace, and joy. In my morning orison, I hear Thy voice assuring me of Thy continued favor; in the labor of the day, Thou art ever with me, and I feel that I may rest upon Thy mighty arm; and in my evening meditations, Thy blessed Spirit witnesses with mine that Thou dost own me as Thy child. In every trial when the enemy doth beset me, Thou art my Tower and hiding Place. When, in an unguarded moment, I step in slippery places, Thy hand doth hold and lift me up. And when in ignorance I would rush to danger, Thou dost restrain me in Thy kindness.

O my Father, how art Thou ever kind, ever tender, ever watchful! All I am, is of Thy goodness; and all I am or may be, shall be rendered back to Thee with a thankful heart, in the trust it may be found, in Christ, worthy of Thine acceptance. Take me, O blessed Father, to Thyself, and, in this evening's prayer, let me feel the consolations of Thy presence. Take Thou, also, my Associate; and may this, to us both, be the unveiling of Thine inner Shrine!

Nineteenth.

Morning. Ps. lxxxix. 19.

Evening. 2 Thes. iii.

THE hopes and consolations of the Gospel of Jesus appeal to us in every condition of our unstable and ever-changeful experience. No night so dark as may dim Bethlehem's Star of promise; no wild-dashing tempest-waves can drown that voice, "thus far shalt thou go, and no farther;" no bitter blasts of adverse fortune can sweep away from us our trust that "all things work together for good to them that love God." In every calamity, may we cling to the Word of Truth, knowing that though heaven and earth pass away, not one jot or tittle of this Word shall fail.

Thou, O Lord, art faithful; and may Thy faithfulness beget in us a corresponding faithfulness of trust in Thee, and a more becoming patience in the Lord's work. Because we see not the immediate result of our effort, may we not give way to mistrust and discouragement, but, in patient waiting for Christ, continue unwearied in well doing. It is not for us to estimate the chances of success, but to labor on, knowing that the Lord will bring every seed to ultimate perfection, and reward him who scattered it.

Twentieth.

Morning. Ps. xc. Evening. 1 Tim. i.

PARENT of every mercy and favor, who hast given to us all that we enjoy, from whom we have received all we have and are, sincerely and devoutly would I thank Thee for all those providences which have led me to a knowledge of Jesus as my Savior and Redeemer. I desire to recognize Thy Hand of favor and kindness, Heavenly Father, in giving me so favored a place in Thy creation—in a land and a day of Gospel freedom, of Bibles and Sabbaths.

O had I been born amidst those who sit in the regions of darkness and the shadow of death, or even in this blessed land, but doomed to poverty and ignorance, to want and crime; had I, in infancy, been cast upon the world homeless and friendless, O how sad had been my fate! How bitter might the cup of life have been, and how sunless all its future, how hopeless its hereafter! And yet how many such there are, to whom life offers no more cheering prospects, and death but the rest and silence of the grave. In such a world, is there naught for me to do but to live in ease?

How many are perishing for the truth I enjoy! How many might I instruct and comfort!

Twenty-first.

Morning. Ps. xci. Evening. 1 Tim. ii.

Pride and vanity often attire themselves in the habiliments of Respectability, and steal within our hearts quite unawares. And while we think we are but actuated by a desire to meet the proper wants of society, we are catering to them. When we go to the House of Worship, is there no secret satisfaction with our gay attire, no hidden purpose of display? Have we not sometimes set our sails to catch the breath of praise? Have we not esteemed more highly our outward adornment than internal riches? Do not we daily spend more time to beautify the clayey temple, than to keep its altar-fires undimmed —more hours to robe the earthy for this span of time, than the heavenly for eternity?

Associates, may He who is no respecter of persons, who is never deceived with the outward appearance, lift us above this ignoble selfishness, and fill us with the great desire and resolution, first of all, to robe ourselves in the spotless garments of Christ's righteousness.

What will it avail to live on earth robed in gold and ermine, but to stand speechless in the Great Day, because without the wedding-garment?

Twenty-Second.

Morning. Ps. xcii. Evening. 1 Tim. iii.

"GREAT is the mystery of godliness."

Receive, O Heavenly Father! thy returning prodigal! Wash me in the blood of thy dear Son; clothe me with his perfect righteousness; and sanctify me throughout by the power of thy Spirit! Destroy, I beseech thee, more and more the power of sin in my heart! Transform me more into thine own image, and fashion me to the resemblance of Jesus, whom henceforward I would acknowledge as my teacher and sacrifice, my intercessor and my Lord!

Communicate to me, I beseech thee, all needful influences of thy purifying, thy cheering, and thy comforting Spirit. And lift up that "light of thy countenance upon me" which will put the sublimest joy and gladness into my soul.

Dispose my affairs, O God, in a manner which may be most subservient to thy glory and my own truest happiness; and when I have done and borne thy will upon earth, call me from hence at what time and in what manner thou pleasest.

DR. DODDRIDGE.

Twenty-Third.

Morning. Ps. xcii. Evening. 1 Tim. iv.

THOUGH the wicked flourish like a green bay-tree, though the work of his hands prosper, and he spread himself on every side, and though the upright find little favor in the sight of men, and though he eat the bread of poverty and humiliation, yet do we know that it shall *not* be well with the wicked, and that godliness *is* profitable unto all things.

Contentment foldeth not her gentle wings more lovingly in the palaces of the great than in the humble cottage of the poor. "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith."

All is not profitable to the soul that the world calls prosperity. The one gives us ill-gotten gains, the other an approving conscience; the one, dizzy affluence with its resistless pleasures and temptations, drawing us to perdition, the other, the happy, quiet unconcern of "neither poverty nor riches," and the promise of the life to come. Give me, Heavenly Father, more of that heart which leaves all to Thy disposal, which trusts every interest to Thy superintending goodness, and which ever says The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.

Twenty-fourth.

Morning. Ps. xciv. 1-11. Evening. 1 Tim. v.

O THOU who art full of compassion, overborne with a sense of my errors and ignorance, heart-oppressed by my sinfulness, I would fain come and lay my weary head on the bosom of a merciful and loving Savior. Blessed Jesus, Thy tenderness encourages me to draw near, and Thy mercy bids me hope for forgiveness. I ever feel, within my very heart, my vileness, my moral weakness; and am ashamed of my want of affection for Him who is the Light, the Hope, and Comfort of my soul.

Come, O Thou Blessed One, and let me hear Thy voice, let me see Thy face, let me feel Thy Spirit moving in my heart! At this hour wilt Thou appear! Come in Thy forgiving grace, and touch me with the blood of cleansing, and let me rejoice in a consciousness that Thou dost love me, and dost permit me to rest all my care on Thee. Give me, Heavenly Father, and my Associate, at this hour of prayer, an unwonted access to the throne of grace. O may we so lay all upon the altar of consecration, that fire shall descend and consume the sacrifice! Come, O my Lord! How much do I need Thy comforting and sustaining assurance of favor!

Twenty-fifth.

Morning. Ps. xciv. 12. Evening. 1 Tim. vi.

AGAIN the earth is gathering to repose. Departing day is bearing up to heaven its duties, trials, errors, and transgressions. Ere the recording angel sets them in the Book to await the Day of Judgment, I would bow before the altar of forgiveness, and implore forbearance.

O Thou who hast Thyself, by Thine own sufferings and death, made atonement for the sins of men, if I have this day followed too much the ways of the world, or inclined too much to its pleasures; if I have been lured by its blandishments, or beguiled by the tongue of flattery; if the words of my mouth or the works of my hands, have not been righteous before Thee, in mercy wilt Thou remember, pity, and forgive. He who Himself hath borne my sins, whose compassion turns no penitent away unreconciled, bids me come.

Into Thy hands, Heavenly Father, to whom I would ever come for counsel and protection, do I now commit myself and all that is dear to me. Remember all the loved, and ever keep them as in the hollow of Thy hand. May we sleep in peace, and awake reinvigorated for life's duties!

Twenty-Sixth.

Morning. Ps. xov. Evening. 2 Tim. i.

SWEETLY solemn is the recollection, Life is winging us away from this fading scene of beauty, yet how full of immortal hope and blessing! Were this our only rest, how soon would our spirits sigh and languish for a "better country"—a more enduring substance. When the cloud of affliction broods darkly over us, veiling from our vision all of earthly good, and sorrow's night enshrouds us in the thick gloom, how

"Sweet to look upward, and behold
Eternal joys our own!"

O, there is something in the spirit's consciousness of heaven as its final home, that gilds the darkest night of sorrow with light and blessing. And though it may sink tremblingly beneath its weight of care, yet will it burst the fetters that bind it earthward, claiming, in holy rapture, the light and life above.

Heavenly Father, in this world of sin and sorrow —of care and weariness—as the shadows lengthen across the landscape of my life, be Thou nearer and still nearer to me. May every morning awaken me to a new appreciation of Thy presence, and every evening bring the sweet assurance Thou art with me!

Twenty-Seventh.

Morning. Ps. xcvi. Evening. 2 Tim. ii.

CHRISTIAN PILGRIM, art thou enduring hardness as a good soldier, that thou mayest fight life's great battle well? Hast thou disentangled thyself from the chains of sin and earthly pleasures, that thou mayest be free for combat? Knowest thou not that at every step foes await thee, sometimes with hidden snares, sometimes with fiery darts, and sometimes transformed to angels of light? Shalt thou hope for escape when even Jesus was assailed?

Yet, O Christian Pilgrim, fear not; for God, even thy God, hath assured thee that "the Lord knoweth them that are his," and that no temptation shall befall thee but He will make a way of escape.

Let us gird ourselves, then, with the armor of our victorious Lord, and, with our hand fast hold of Omnipotence, go boldly forth in the path of rectitude, knowing that we shall come off conquerors through Him that hath loved us and given Himself for us. May we never trust our own arm of weakness, but ever remember whence cometh our strength! What though we sometimes seem to falter in the conflict, *we know* if we make Him our Trust, He will never leave or forsake us.

Twenty-Eighth.

Morning. Ps. xcvii.

Evening. 2 Tim. iii.

MAY this delineation of the fearful wreck on which humanity may come when left to the unchecked influences of an evil nature, lead me to a contemplation of my indebtedness to the restraining influences of Grace. For such as they were, had I been, but for the preserving and renovating power of the Gospel of Christ. In my life, my thoughts, feelings, friendships, and affections, may I ever heed the Apostle's advice, "from such turn away."

And if, even in this short life, we are capable of wandering so far from all happiness and peace, what must be the condition of those in the long ages of eternity, who contemn all of His kind monitions, and would none of His reproofs!

O Blessed Father, eternity will not suffice to render to Thee thanks and obedience, that Thou hast so often kept my heart from loving error, and from being drawn away from the pure and holy to the vile and sinful.

And who can estimate the infinity of blessedness of the soul which is kept with God through all life's wanderings, and is, at last, made welcome to the bliss of heaven and the companionship of the sanctified?

Twenty-Ninth.

Morning. Ps. xxviii. Evening. 2 Tim. iv.

There is a significance in all human things which I too feebly apprehend. The present so absorbs our being, that we fail to feel that words are the evanescent drapery of immortal thoughts, and actions the earth-struck shadows of eternal verities.

May I become more and more impressed with the eternal nature of all temporal occurrences! May I more fully comprehend within my soul, that no thought or deed is more actual now than at the Day of Judgment, or in untold ages yet to come! May I seek to do good in season and out of season, as if the Judge was at the door, more fully realizing that the thoughts and actions of time will be as actual, living, and present, in eternity, as now.

And O, when the few, swift-winged days I have to live, are fled, and "the hour of my departure is at hand," may I, and mayest thou, my Associate, be enabled to look forward to that eternity even now so near, and say, with exulting Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for *me* a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day."

Thirtieth.

Morning. Ps. xcix. Evening. Titus i.

"THEY profess that they know God; but in works they deny him."

Reason clearly shows that those things which men, when left to follow their own choice, show by their actions that they prefer, are what they do really prefer in their hearts. Sincerity in religion, agreeably to what has been observed, consists in placing our affections supremely upon God, in having a disposition to resign all for Christ. But our actions are the proper evidence as to what we really prefer.

When God and other things are placed in competition, — religion and its connected blessings on the one hand, and worldly interests or pleasures on the other,—a man's behavior under such circumstances, in actually forsaking the one and adhering to the other, is the proper test as to which he really prefers. Sincerity consists in forsaking all for Christ in heart; but to forsake all for Christ in heart is the same thing as to have a heart to forsake all for Christ. It is therefore extremely absurd for any to say that he has a good heart while he has a wicked life, or does not bring forth the fruit of universal holiness. PRES. EDWARDS.

Thirty-first.

Morning. Ps. c., ci. Evening. Titus ii.

THE pre-eminently practical character of these Epistles teach us that, having once been born of the Spirit, and made partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light, we are called to a life not merely of devotion or feeling, but of earnest labor in and for the cause of our Master. It is not enough that we feel religion internally; we must give it, in our lives, an external embodiment—an actual, visible existence. We must *live* religion, as well as feel and believe it!

We are apt to say with John, "every one that loveth is born of God," and with Paul, "by faith are ye saved," not heeding the exposition of James, "faith without works is dead," or of the Savior, "he that hath my commandments and *keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.*"

We are too wont to trust to what we feel, rather than to note what fruit our feeling is producing. The tree must be judged by its fruit; and if our affection bring but barrenness, though it live, it must be of feeble, sickly growth.

Associates, let us *labor* as well as pray; and by our faithful keeping of His commandments, witness the sincerity of our love to Jesus.

NOVEMBER.

First.

Morning. Ps. cii. 1-15.

Evening. Titus iii.

Beauteous evening of the year,—sweet, earnest, yet somber October,—adieu! Thou art gone with thy solemn autumn stillness, thy azure sky, celestial in its purity and tenderness, thy placid moonlight hours, loveliest of the year. Thou art gone, but, Fellow Pilgrims, to some of us who have been happy in its beauty, never to return.

As we have looked out upon the frosty sheen of evening, greeted only by the cadence of the cricket, or the melancholy monotone of the katydid, beheld the stars in their unwonted luster looking down upon us with their cold and silent gaze, a voice prophetic has whispered to our listening spirits—Ere these return again shall thy Pilgrim band be severed, and

some who, with thee, have looked and loved, have toiled, and hoped, and wept, will be sleeping in the silent, dewy beds where broken hearts have gathered them.

Yet, O loved friends, when to each of us that sad hour shall come, gently and kindly as stern October bore away the loving and beautiful Summer, kissing her fair forehead as he scattered her clustering ringlets, touching to jewels of peerless purity her tears as they hung on the lashes, and, as his chill breath hushed the warm pulsations of her heart forever, folding her upon his own calm bosom, saying tenderly, "good-night," so gently may the summons come to us, and so lovingly may we be borne away!

Yet not as the sad and hopeless, to the silence, darkness, and decay of our cold and cheerless resting-place; for, beyond the Gate, are unnumbered hosts of Heaven's shining ones, awaiting the coming in of earth-born spirits; and, ere earth's harsh and discordant notes have ceased upon our ears, shall the music of their angel harmonies touch our spirits' unawakened springs of joy, in a song of welcome to that Land of rest where toil and darkness, sin and death, can never enter, and God is evermore the light and blessing of the soul.

Second.

Morning. Ps. cii. 16. Evening. Philemon.

Is it not possible for me so to spend all the hours of this month, that, at its close, I may feel I have walked with God? I know, if I watch unto prayer, it is possible to attain to a peace and joy which Christians too seldom experience. This constant possession of the soul in patience, in calm resignation, and in the assurance of the Holy Spirit, comes not of irregular and inconstant devotion and prayer, however earnest and heartfelt they may be; but of *abiding* in God. Such a repose of the soul on the bosom of its Creator, would I crave, not now only, but continually.

May I constantly remember that I cannot approach and walk with God in prayer, after a day of carelessness and error! Wherefore, in labor as well as prayer, let me seek to walk with Him. May this desire and resolution so take possession of my heart and nature, that I shall bear with me a constant purpose that each thought and action shall merit His approval. And wilt Thou, Heavenly Father, hold me in all my ways, that, for a moment, I may never turn away from Thee. What good can there be where Thou art not?

Third.

Morning. Ps. ciii. 1-11. Evening. Heb. i.

ATTUNE my heart and voice to join in that chorus of praise which angels ever sing — that song of gratitude which the Redeemed alone can learn.

"O Thou God of my salvation,
My Redeemer from all sin,
Moved by thy divine compassion,
Who hast died my heart to win,
I will praise thee:
Where shall I thy praise begin?

Though unseen, I love the Savior;
He hath brought salvation near;
Manifests his pard'ning favor;
And when Jesus doth appear,
Soul and body
Shall his glorious image bear.

While the angel choirs are crying,
Glory to the great I Am,
I with them will still be vying—
Glory! glory to the Lamb!
O how precious
Is the sound of Jesus' name!

Angels now are hov'ring round us,
Unperceived amid the throng;
Wond'ring at the love that crowned us,
Glad to join the holy song:
Hallelujah,
Love and praise to Christ belong!

Fourth.

Morning. Ps. ciii. 12. Evening. Heb. ii.

WHAT an inestimable value of its immortality does this exhibition of Divine effort to redeem the soul presuppose! How great must be the interest at stake, that the Infinite Jehovah should have wrought out all the plans here set forth! Verily, ought we to give the more earnest heed. Verily, how shall we hope to escape if we lightly esteem or neglect so great salvation?

He that comprehended eternity, and knew the soul's eternal worth, gave Himself that it might not be lost. May the contemplation of Jesus, disrobed of the glory which He had with the Father before the world was,—made lower than the angels,—yea, made one of us, that He might suffer, and, as an atonement, be made perfect through His suffering, that He might become the Captain of our salvation, and bring us unto glory,—may these contemplations fill me with a more profound estimation of the immortal interests entrusted to my decision and guardianship! O God, my Strength, help me, that I fail not in these eternal trusts. Once lost, all is lost forever; once gained, and the soul hath hazard nevermore.

Fifth.

Morning. Ps. civ. 1-15. Evening. Heb. iii.

It seems to be taught us here, that, while our Heavenly Father shows His hand in tenderness and mercy, or in justice and punishment, we may so shut our hearts to truth, so hate the light, as to conceal effectually from our minds all His ways and works of kindness. It is no palliation that we cannot see, when we have thus hardened our hearts; it only becomes our greater misfortune that we are so blinded and are henceforth less likely ever again to discern the way of life and peace.

How marvellous the relations that subsist between us and Thee, O God! If we come to Thee, Thou wilt cover us with that Hand that holds the universe; Thou wilt shield us, that no evil can befall us; Thou wilt lead us in the goodness of Thy love, and nourish us with angels' food. But if we depart from Thee, we are left to combat, single-handed and unsustained, the myriad evils that claim our souls for prey. May I so love Thee, Heavenly Father, and all Thy Truth, that Thou canst ever be my God and my Protector! May my Associate ever be Thy true and faithful follower; and wilt Thou ever grant the protection of Thy favor.

Sixth.

Morning. Ps. civ. 16.

Evening. Heb. iv.

"THERE remaineth, therefore, a *rest* to the people God. For he that is entered into his rest, he o hath ceased from his own works, as God did m his. Let us labor, therefore, to enter into that it."

"There is an hour of peaceful rest,
To mourning wand'rers given;
There is a joy for souls distressed,
A balm for every wounded breast,—
'Tis found above, in heaven.

There is a home for weary souls,
By sin and sorrow driven,
When tossed on life's tempestuous shoals,
Where storms arise and ocean rolls,
And all is drear but heaven.

There faith lifts up the tearless eye,
To brighter prospects given;
And views the tempest passing by,
The evening shadows quickly fly,
And all serene in heaven.

There fragrant flowers immortal bloom,
And joys supreme are given;
There rays divine dispense the gloom;
Beyond the confines of the tomb
Appears the dawn of heaven."

Seventh.

Morning. Ps. cv. 1-25. Evening. Heb. v.

How incomprehensible is the mystery of the Divine Humanity—that Jesus, who was God Himself, should be clad in flesh, and dwell as mortal on the earth—that He should toil and suffer, hope and fear, weep and pray, as we so often do—that it was needful to the perfection of His mission, that He should thus live and suffer!

O, what consolation does it afford our lacerated spirits, when the wrongs and ills of life force from our lids unbidden tears—when sorrow chokes our utterance, and lays its heavy burden on our throbbing breasts, O what healing balm does it pour into our wounded hearts, to know and feel, as we bow before the throne of Mercy, that, though our tongue be palsied, and our only prayer be tears, fast gushing from the deep-touched fountain, Jesus is cognizant of every shade of sorrow, and responds in sympathy to every pang of grief; for He has felt them all. With what confidence does it inspire our weak and trembling faith, that Jesus too, in darkness and in trial, lifted up the voice of tearful supplication. O Heart of the Divine-Human, remember our weakness!

Eighth.

Morning. Pa. cv. 26.

Evening. Heb. vi.

ASSOCIATES, having once obtained remission of sins, and an assurance of reconciliation, let us not ever linger upon these first principles, but, looking to the higher walks of Christian life, to a holier and more intimate communion with the Father of our spirits, let us seek to go on to perfection.

Not that we may, in this world, look for an exemption from trial and temptation; not that we may attain to those Christian ways where watchfulness and prayer are not momentarily in need; yet, beloved Fellow Pilgrims, we *may* so walk with God all life's journey through, that the light of His smile shall ever shine upon our hearts. We may so bring forth fruit to His approbation, that the continual dew of His grace shall refresh our thirsty souls. We may so come to Him in confidence, faith, and love, as to feel our heads reposing on His bosom of affection, and His hand leading us in every way of life. To such perfection we may attain; and, for such, let us here resolve we will strive. Esteemed Associate, let *us* lead a higher life, better than we have been living. Wilt thou, to-morrow night, meet me nearer heaven?

Ninth.

Morning. Ps. cvi. 1-15. Evening. Heb. vii.

God over all, blessed forever, brought nigh unto Thee through the intercession and offering of Him who hath the greater and unchangeable priesthood, I would come with humble boldness to the throne of heavenly grace, to ask forgiveness for the errors and short-comings of another day. I bless and adore Thy goodness that we are permitted to make known our wants in the Name of Him who is able to save to the uttermost.

From no excellence of my own am I worthy to come before Thee, even though Thy mercies be infinite, for I am too vile to receive of Thy favor; but, sanctified in the blood of a higher Priest who is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners and made higher than the heavens," clothed in His Righteousness, I am worthy of all that Heaven may bestow, yet only for His sake. Come Thou, therefore, God of grace, and honor Thy Son through my unworthy instrumentality. Let the greatness of His redemption, and the infinite efficacy of His intercession, be made manifest in that it avails to my more complete sanctification, and lifts a sinful child of earth to the hopes of Heaven.

Tenth.

Morning. Ps. cvi. 16–31.

Evening. Heb. viii.

ASSOCIATES, let us devote this evening's meditation to a renewal of our covenant-vows. We have been made participants of that better covenant of which Christ was the great Mediator. Through the excellency of His mediation, the hand-writing against us was taken away, and offended Justice appeased. "For this is the covenant I will make, saith the Lord. I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

Here are two things; the keeping of the law, and the forgiveness of sin: the one rests upon the other. Associates, have we kept this covenant so that God can fulfill His promise? Have we kept His laws in mind, and written them on our hearts? Have we been His people that He might be our God? Have we striven so to know God in our hearts that He might forget our iniquities? Have we not often violated this better covenant, and yet hoped that God would abide by His promises? In the deep sincerity of our hearts let us here ratify our obligations, and covenant anew to be the Lord's.

Eleventh.

Morning. Ps. cvi. 32. Evening. Heb. ix.

O THOU who dwellest in light and glory unapproachable, Compassionate Father of our spirits, I bless and thank Thee that Thou hast instituted a new and living way through Thy Son, whereby we may come even into the "holiest of holies," and there, at the Mercy Seat, in the Name of our Redeemer, make known to Thee our wants in prayer and supplication.

"From every stormy wind that blows,
From every swelling tide of woes,
There is a calm, a sure retreat:
'Tis found beneath the mercy-seat.

There is a place, where Jesus sheds
The oil of gladness on our heads;
A place than all besides more sweet,—
It is the blood-bought mercy-seat.

There is a scene, where spirits blend,
Where friend holds fellowship with friend;
Though sundered far, by faith they meet
Around one common mercy-seat.

There, there on eagles' wings we soar,
And sin and sense molest no more;
And heaven comes down our souls to greet,
While glory crowns the mercy-seat."

Twelfth.

Morning. Ps. cvii. 1–22. Evening. Heb. x. 1–22.

WHAT can be so delightful as that holy calm of the mind which enables us to unbosom unto God, as unto a father, all our feelings and desires; to dwell on all his perfections, not only without dismay or dislike, but with complacency and confidence; to repeat and plead all his great and precious promises with faith and hope; and to anticipate his guidance until death, and his presence through eternity? This is a joy which the world cannot give. Even when it does not rise so high as all this, it is more satisfactory than any human pleasure; for the heart is relieved and soothed, if it can only pour out its fears and anxieties into the bosom of God.

The bare consciousness of having felt as in his presence, wept as in his presence, and spoken as in his presence, leaves a sweet solemnity upon the spirit, which is healing, if not exhilarating. And when the soul can realize God as noticing, listening, and pitying, and feels itself getting nearer and nearer to his presence and heart, and finds itself melted and impressed as if he were visibly present, or audibly speaking, then its joy is unspeakable, even if it is not full of glory. PHILLIPS.

Thirteenth.

Morning. Ps. cvii. 23. Evening. Heb. x. 23.

As day after day thus steals imperceptibly by, so like its fellows that it seems we are living but the same day again, and our feet standing upon the same ground, Soul, dost thou see how swiftly thou art gliding onward? Dost thou feel each day thou art older than yesterday? Canst thou daily see that thou art wiser? Canst thou say at its close, 'To-day I have laid up some precious pearls for heaven?' Canst thou see that the seeds of holiness are flourishing with an accepted growth in thy heart? Art thou daily gaining victory over the evil that is within thee? Art thou more and more controlled by all the nobler virtues and excellencies of soul, and do the appetites and passions hold less sway over thy thoughts and wishes? Dost thou feel that thou art this evening more a freeman in the truth and liberty of the Gospel than ever before? Has there never been a time when thou wert more free from evil thoughts than now?

O my soul, since thou art this evening nearer to the close of thy pilgrimage, so oughtest thou to be far nearer heaven. Art thou nearer than yesterday? Hast thou made any progress to-day?

Fourteenth.

Morning. Ps. cviii.

Evening. Heb. xi. 1-19.

"AND confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."

If we are the people of God, we profess to have left the lust of the eye, the pride of life, the love of the world; to have turned our backs upon all that charms the flesh, that captivates the senses, and makes man the slave of sin. They who are absorbed by the cares of the world, who are anxious only about its pleasures, in whose hearts its profits are the absorbing thought, cannot be said to have left the world; they are still in it, and of it, and living by it, and resting upon it.

If we are looking for a better country, as pilgrims and strangers in this one, surely we shall often anticipate it. The love of this world will be overpowered by the prospect of a better one; our glory will be drawn down from afar; our riches will be the unsearchable riches of Christ; our hearts will ever pulsate toward our home, and our faces look thitherward.

Let us pray that ours may be the pilgrim's heart and the stranger's spirit.

CUMMING.

Fifteenth.

Morning. Pa. cix. 1-16. Evening. Heb. xi. 20.

THIS is not merely a world of trial, but a trial world. Afflictions not merely come, they are sent. It is not accidental that our immortal existence has its beginning in this lower world. This, in some manner, holds a necessary preparation to the world to come; and, in this world's discipline, we are perfected not through pleasure, but through suffering. Shall we therefore murmur at those afflictions which our Heavenly Father sees needful to the perfection of our spirits? Shall we not, therefore, with Moses, *choose* "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season"?

It is not pleasure, nor ease, nor present happiness that we need, so much as that faith which enables us to look upward and beyond the present to the recompense of reward. What God doeth, we know not now. We only know He doeth all in love, and, therefore, we should rest in a faith that questions not, accepts with gratitude, and endures as seeing Him who is invisible. How wondrously different will this life look when we view it from eternity! How short-sighted and ungrateful our complaints!

Sixteenth.

Morning. Ps. cix. 17.

Evening. Heb. xii. 1–13.

ONLY the most enlarged and triumphant faith can enable us to receive into our hearts this great yet severe truth — "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." God chasteneth not but for our profit; and if it be for our profit, then is it no less a Father's kindness because grievous to be borne. Yet how do our hearts respond? When, in His wisdom, love, and kindness, He gratifies our lust-blinded wishes, how our souls well forth their gratitude and thanks! Yet when, in equal wisdom, love, and kindness, He denies, or disappoints, or afflicts, how barren are our hearts of every generous emotion or affection! We deem it high Christian virtue if we *submit without a murmur, if we can be resigned.*

O ungrateful mortal! Is this thy return for Heaven's sleepless care and incessant vigil—its unwearied efforts to fit thee for a world of bliss? O rise thou to a stronger faith and a nobler spirit, and learn that all which His hand metes out, of joy or sorrow, is equally a Heavenly Father's blessing. Learn, in all life's perpetual mutation, to say, not with forced reluctance, but thankfully, from heart as well as lip, Thy will, not mine, be done.

Seventeenth.

Morning. Ps. cx.

Evening. Heb. xii. 14.

Our lives are rendered unhappy often by the hidden roots of bitterness which spring up within us. We feel consciously at fault, yet seem beyond our own control. When some word of unkindness is spoken, when some unmerited censure is cast upon us, or when, perhaps, we are met by some disappointment, the equanimity of our minds is destroyed, our peace is gone, the spirit ruffled and disquieted, and our hearts filled with unhappiness. Ashamed and self-condemned, we seek, often availlessly, to regain our lost serenity.

These roots of bitterness are often so deeply imbedded in our natures, that we almost despair of their complete eradication; yet should we remember there is grace sufficient for us. If we follow the counsel of Paul, "looking diligently," lest any root spring up, we shall find they cannot germinate beneath our watchful censure. But when they have once taken root, Christ alone can restore our souls. Let us, therefore, go to Him, and, confessing all, ask for peace, and pardon, and that strength which will enable us to come off more than conquerors through Him that loved us.

Eighteenth.

Morning. Ps. cxi.

Evening. Heb. xiii.

"THE LORD is my helper."

O Thou Fountain of all light, God of all grace, look down upon me with the love which Thou bearest to Thine own, and let me enjoy a sweet season of fellowship with Thee. I come in the nothingness of the creature, standing alone in the fullness of Jesus —I come just as I am, without one plea, as a sinner, and as the chief of sinners—to Thee, thou Almighty Savior.

I seek to disown all creature confidence, and, with all the burden of my guilt, to cast myself, for time and for eternity, at Thy feet. I cannot stand in myself. I can stand only in Him who has stood so willing a Surety for me—I have no other confidence, I need no other. Jesus, I am complete in Thee. Let me not look inwardly on myself, where there is everything to sink me in despondency and dismay, but let me look with the undivided and unwavering eye of faith to Thy bleeding sacrifice. I rejoice to know that the same blood is free as ever—the same promise remains—"Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

MORNING WATCHES.

Nineteenth.

Morning. Ps. cxii. Evening. James i.

ASSOCIATES, as we read and meditate upon this brief but most practical Epistle, let us welcome to our hearts its precious teachings. How overflowing with divine precepts is almost every verse, giving us counsel at every step of life! Let us seek to feel this is Divine counsel for *us*.

Associates, do we count it joy when we fall into temptation? Does the trial of our faith work patience in us? And when we have a conscious lack of wisdom, do we ask of Him who giveth liberally and upbraideth not? Are we swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath? Especially do we heed this most important requisition, to put a bridle on our tongues?

My soul, receive thou with meekness that Word which is able to save thee; but be thou not a hearer only, but a doer. Look thou into this Word of Truth, and so seek to learn the perfect law of liberty, and the way of perfect obedience; and so continue thou therein, that thou mayest receive, at last, the blessing from the Lord. Look thou, and, from Him around whom no chain of sin was ever coiled, learn to walk in freedom and in holiness.

Twentieth.

Morning. Ps. cxiii. Evening. James ii.

THAT faith which is a simple belief in God, or that trust in His Mercy which has no reference to the correctness of our lives, has little connection with that faith which can save us in the world to come. There is also a forced faith, arising from conscious guilt and a desire for pardon. Although possessed of no abhorrence of sin, or resolution to abandon it, yet, fearful of the penalty, we force ourselves to a hope and trust we may be forgiven now, and whenever we again fall into the same transgression. This syren, with her song so grateful to the ear of sin, hath lulled many a soul to a fatal sleep. The heart is too prone to believe what it earnestly desires.

That faith which doth not strike off the present chains of sin, cannot unshackle them hereafter. That faith which leaves us in transgression now, will leave us there forever. That which lets us sleep in life, will let us sleep in death. That which sows to idleness in time, shall harvest emptiness eternally. Not that faith which merely looks up to heaven with longing eyes and anxious heart, may claim the promise, but that which joyfully lays heart and life upon the sacrificial altar.

Twenty-First.

Morning. Ps. cxiv. Evening. James iii.

Of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. If the heart be pure, the words will be without guile. Yet, though there be kindness and truth, there may be indiscretion; hence is there need that the tongue be bridled. It is not enough that it be true. Truth may be ill-timed and harmful. Not every lawful thing is expedient.

There are few parts of Christian character, over which we need so incessant watch, as speech. There are few whereby we so frequently offend. How small, how simple, is a word, yet how, in a moment, may it scatter all our peace, and lash the passions to a tempest!

Possess me, O Lord, with that self-government which permits no hasty word, no sharp retort; but keeps the door of silence shut when tumult reigns within. Yea, rather, so may I rest on Thee in love and gentleness, in carefulness and wisdom, that I shall neither give nor take offence; that that wisdom which is from above, which is pure and peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, may abound in my heart and be shed forth in my life.

Twenty-Second.

Morning. Ps. cxv. Evening. James iv.

Heavenly Father, Thou whose we all are, as my soul aspires to Thee at the close of the day, it would bear in the arms of its faith and prayer those whom Thou hast given me to love. O Kind Parent, I thank Thee for all those near and dear to me. May my friends be Thy friends! Wilt Thou sanctify our friendships, our affections, and make us all ministers of holiness and heaven to each other. Though for a while we are severed from each other, it is but a few days till we shall all be gathered home to heaven.

Still may we, at the quiet twilight hour, when all the world is hushing to its slumbers, bend the knee and lift our hearts, esteemed Associate, in unison to Him whose promise is to bless where two or three ask in His name! *Associates*, wheresoever ye may dwell, all ye who read with us, and meditate, let us, as we close this day, offer an earnest prayer for each other, that Infinite Mercy may spare us, Infinite Grace preserve, and Kindness Infinite bring us all, at last, to that rest which Heaven alone can offer our longing, weary souls.

Twenty-Third.

Morning. Ps. cxvi., cxvii. Evening. James v.

"THE effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man, availeth much."

God does nothing but in answer to prayer. Every new victory which a soul gains is the effect of a new prayer. On every occasion of uneasiness, we should retire to prayer, that we may give place to the grace and light of God, and then form our resolutions, without being in any pain about what success they may have.

In the greatest temptations, a single look to Christ, and the barely pronouncing his name, suffices to overcome the wicked one, so it be done with confidence and calmness of spirit.

God's command to "pray without ceasing," is founded on the necessity we have of his grace to preserve the life of God in the soul; which can no more subsist one moment without it than the body can without air. Whether we think of, or speak to, God, whether we act or suffer for him, all is prayer, when we have no other object than his love and the desire of pleasing him. In souls filled with love, the desire to please God is a continual prayer.

WESLEY.

Twenty-Fourth.

Morning. Ps. cxviii. 1-15.

Evening. 1 Pet. i.

JESUS, in His Resurrection from the dead, has become not only the chief corner-stone, but the foundation of all our hopes; and, in the fact of His resurrection, we have the spark that vivifies the total of every promise, hope, and faith. He might have suffered and died, to teach us of an "inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away," and still have left us but an unsatisfying possibility; but, in His resurrection, He gave to the one the stamp of actuality that the other had—He gave us not only a hope it might be, but an assurance of the fact, that there is such an inheritance for those who are kept through faith unto salvation.

Hence, our spirit-struggles become no uncertain warfare. We know if we are faithful, we shall receive the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls. We know, that, though we pass away as the flower of the field, if we please Him, He will bring our souls safely to His rest above. May I not war, therefore, with the faint-heartedness of uncertainty, but as one dealing in the realities of eternity—not as one that beateth the air, but as one who knows in whom he has believed.

Twenty-fifth.

Morning. Ps. cxviii. 16.

Evening. 1 Pet. ii.

WILL the Lord remember me in mercy at the close of another day, and in mercy remember also all the loved? We have all sinned and done amiss; we have transgressed Thy righteous commandments in a thousand ways, both seen and unseen; we have lusted after forbidden things, and turned away from that which Thou hast taught us to seek; we are far from that rectitude which becomes Thy children. Yet, O Lord, Thou art gracious; Thou dost spare with infinite tenderness and compassion; wherefore will I come unto Thee.

And now, while I resolve before Thee to seek a higher and purer life, wilt Thou remember Mercy and forgive? While we lift up to Thee an earnest and sincere heart for a more spiritual life, O wilt Thou not come near, and bless and strengthen us? May we all go forth to life's duties on the morrow, with our affections more fully set upon heavenly things. O take us, Lord, nearer to Thyself, and give us clearer views of the world to come, that we may be inspired to a closer walk with Thee. As evening veils the earth again, may Heaven with its cheering visions dawn upon our souls.

Twenty-Sixth.

Morning. Ps. cxix. A. B. Evening. 1 Pet. iii.

ASSOCIATES, let us not overlook the fact that Christianity requires that we be courteous. Courtesy is one of the minor graces, but not unimportant. Let us seek to be courteous in spirit and feeling as well as manner.

That impoliteness which, cloaking itself with the pompous but specious title of plainness, frank openheartedness, prides itself upon bluntly "speaking to one's face," is wide apart from Christian courtesy. It is an attempt to cover with seeming but false honesty, what we have no right to say at all. Truth and honesty are no palliation of rudeness. There are few Christian graces which appear more lovely than genuine, heartfelt courtesy—and few which Christians so much lack.

Let us not, Associates, confine our Christian perfection to the closet and to communion with our Heavenly Father. To love our fellow man is equally one of the two Great Commandments. Nor will it be deemed an acceptable love if it beget not a constant, out-working kindness. Have we not sometimes brought discredit upon our Christian name by our want of Christian charity and amiability?

Twenty-Seventh.

Morning. Ps. cxix. G. D.

Evening. 1 Pet. iv.

If we are reproached for Christ's sake, and bear it in a Christian spirit, how satisfied should we be with the thought we wear the livery our blessed Master wore before us, we tread the same path that he so beautifully and meekly trod; we are in this matter followers of Christ, and are in the world as he was in it! If we be God's people, God writes on our heart the benedictions of his own lips, "Blessed are the pure, and blessed are the meek, and blessed are the humble;" and all the clouds and reproaches of the world cannot dim one feature of a Christian character, or destroy one element of faith, and hope, and joy, which God has fixed there. It is given to angels to serve Christ simply; it is given to Christians to suffer as well as serve for his Name's sake.

The curtain of reproach falls upon a Christian as the curtain of night falls on the earth, revealing above far greater glory than it conceals below, and he feels in all its sweetness the force of this benediction, "If ye be reproached for Christ's sake, happy are ye."

Cumming.

Twenty-Eighth.

Morning. Ps. cxix. H. V.

Evening. 1 Pet. v.

WHY should we fill our hearts with anxious fear, when a God of Omnipotence and love careth for us? This trust in the all-provident oversight of our Heavenly Father, does not take that practical hold of our characters it ought. We are ever concerning ourselves with future contingencies — anticipating to-morrow's evils and necessities, seemingly in entire forgetfulness that the hairs of our head are numbered, and that not a sparrow falls without His notice.

We ought to school our hearts to a cheerful acquiescence in the results of our best endeavors. It is ours to labor with all our might for the accomplishment of good, God's to perfect it, not perhaps as and when we expected, but in His own better time. That which we deem a good, may not be so; shall we then complain that a compassionate Father, while rewarding our sincere and well-meant efforts, permits our work to fail? Our failures may be, and doubtless often are, as emphatic blessings as our successes. Our scheme, if perfected, might prove our ruin. Let us trust more confidingly in His watchful governance.

Twenty-Ninth.

Morning. Ps. cxix. G. C.

Evening. 2 Pet. i.

BELOVED ASSOCIATE, how gently, hitherto, the Lord has led us through these many slow and weary years! In hours of wasting loneliness, how has His Spirit given peace and comfort; in darkness and despair, how has He been a Light and Guide to our wandering souls; in hours of languishing and pain, how often have we felt the sustaining arms of Jesus beneath our throbbing heads, while, in words of tenderness, He whispered to our fainting spirits, "Fear not. I will never leave nor forsake thee!"

O companion, dear and cherished! amid all that this ever-changing world hath brought of sorrow, disappointed hopes, and tears, hath not thy Father's all-controlling Hand been ever over thee for good, and, in a thousand ways, wrought out unlooked-for blessings? Wherefore, casting all thy care on Him who loveth thee, and resting in His mercy and forgiveness, turn thine eyes, and hopes, and heart to that Better Land where toil and weariness shall be no more, where pain and sorrow never come, and where the heart, touched to holiness of feeling and affection, rests in the bosom of the loved, and of a forgiving Savior.

Thirtieth.

Morning. Ps. cxix. T. J.

Evening. 2 Pet. ii.

ERE the sentinels of eternity turn the hour-glass of another month, let me come to Him with whom is mercy and forgiveness, that life's unnumbered errors be not set unforgiven in the account that awaits that Judgment which shall spare not.

O God of goodness, what have I to acknowledge before Thee of ignorance, of error, of transgression in this fleeting month. In how many instances have I lacked wisdom, judgment, discretion, and self-control, when proper diligence would have fitted me for the time and occasion! How often have I hesitated at duty, and excused myself against conscience! How often looked with longing eyes and a coveting heart, at ease, at pleasure, and at worldly prosperity! How frequently has self-love turned away from sacrifice, and self-will from Thy commandments!

O Lord God, who knowest our frame and our weakness, cover me in the Great Atonement from the just punishment of my crimes and follies; and spare me for the sake of Him who hath suffered for me. O blot from the Book of Thy remembrance, the record of my transgressions! Jesus, my Redeemer, cover me with Thy righteousness.

"AND him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out."

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that thy blood was shed for me,
And that thou bidd'st me come to thee,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark blot,
To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, though tossed about
With many a conflict, many a doubt,
With fears within and wars without,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind,
Sight, riches, healing of the mind,
Yea, all I need, in thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve,
Because thy promise I believe—
O Lamb of God, I come!

Just as I am—Thy love unknown
Has broken every barrier down;
Now to be thine, yea, thine alone—
O Lamb of God, I come!"

DECEMBER.

First.

Morning. Ps. cxix. C. L.

Evening. 2 Pet. iii.

HAIL, Winter, glorious yet dread! Hail with thy wild, piercing blasts, thy sad sternness, thy drear and lonely desolation! Come to my heart, gray and bearded Teacher, and instruct me as thou wilt of life, and time, and death! Whence come thy bitter blasts, and why so fiercely do they seize every beauty Summer scatters o'er the landscape? Why touchest thou so cruelly the tender and the innocent? Why dost thou wrap so many little ones in thy snowy shroud-skirts, and bear them from our hearts to return no more? Why comest thou with a look so stern, and a heart so pitiless? Say, grim and bearded Teacher?

'Though not like rosy-lipped and balmy-breathing

June, yet come I not in kindness or in pity less than she. The obdurate heart of selfish man hath need of a sterner school than Summer's, with her smiles, her beauties, and her loveliness, to teach of patience and submission, of sympathy and brotherhood. We cannot pity what we do not feel, nor feel what we have not endured. Unchecked enjoyment hath little fruit but selfishness; and ceaseless bounty, but overbearing pride and resistless passion.

Kindness, sympathy, affection, patience, and resignation, the purest flowers that blossom in the poisonous atmosphere of this sinful world, take firmest root in hearts deep probed by suffering, and softened by the tears of sorrow. Therefore am I sent with iron hand to touch all hearts, and teach of pity and compassion, and with desolation to instruct of necessity and labor, of energy and strength, of courage, resignation, and endurance.

Wherefore learn thou that life is not a summer-bower dream, but the stern and incessant struggle of the soul for those virtues which are won in time, or lost forever. Worth and goodness come not less of patient labor than greatness. He that would harvest whatsoever, must sow the seed in Spring, and till with diligence in Summer. He only who fights life's battles successfully to the end shall wear the coronet of victory.'

Second.

Morning. Ps. cxix. M. N.

Evening. 1 John i.

MAY I know what it is, O God, to have fellowship with the Father and the Son; and O that I knew with whom of Thy spiritual family upon earth I could hold fellowship. How marvellously little I enjoy of what may be called social religion, or the sympathy of mind with mind, each actuated by the common faith and love of the gospel. May the light of the upper sanctuary beam directly upon my soul. In God's own light may I clearly see light. Make me glad, O Lord, by the shining of Thy countenance upon me; and give me even now, a foretaste of that fullness of joy which is at Thy right hand, of those pleasures which are for evermore.

Forgive and cleanse me, O God; cleanse me alike from guilt and from pollution—and ward off sin and Satan from my soul. Let me no longer be deceived by the imagination of any strength or sufficiency in myself; but let me look up to the very God of peace, that He may sanctify me wholly, and that henceforth I may put off the unfruitful works of darkness, and put on the armor of light.

CHALMERS.

Third.

Morning. Ps. cxix. S. A.

Evening. 1 John ii.

THIS chapter, like many others in the lesser Epistles, concentrates many of the most precious truths of our Divine Christianity in few words. What deep meaning is hidden in this first verse, and what consolation, what comfort is brought to us, all along our wayward course of life, in the assurance that we have an advocate with the Father!

With what searching application these tests of love, in the third, fourth, and fifth verses, come to our hearts, stripping us in an instant of all hope, if our lives do not respond to our fancied affections.

Heavenly Parent, may I daily so keep Thy word that I may have an assurance, not only that I truly know Thee, but also, that my love for Thee and things eternal is being perfected, and for the world and the things of the world, is being overcome. Thus may I be enabled continually to approach that perfect state wherein the full light of Heaven shall be shed abroad in my soul, thus preparing it on earth for that light, unto which I cannot now approach, but which is full of joy and blessedness—for that purity of which we cannot now conceive, but in which we shall be as the angels.

Fourth.

Morning. Ps. cxix. P. T.

Evening. 1 John iii.

It is impossible, from the helplessness and ignorance of our condition, as well as from the sinfulness of our natures, to walk uprightly before a Being so infinitely holy, or to render a perfect obedience to a law so perfect. God, from His nature, must discern little else in us than error and transgression. Whether, therefore, our own hearts condemn us or not, we must stand condemned before Him, and that law which is holy, just, and good.

But, thanks to His great love wherewith He hath loved us, we "are not under the law, but under grace;" and to the law of grace, we can render a perfect obedience. We can do all that our natures and condition allow, and that, in Christ, is perfect obedience; and herein will neither our own hearts nor God condemn us.

Associates, can we not seek so to live daily, that, at our evening prayer, we may feel we have walked, to-day, in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless? Here let us resolve so to walk to-morrow, if God spare our unprofitable lives, refraining our tongues from evil, and our lips from speaking guile!

Fifth.

Morning. Ps. cxix. K. R.

Evening. 1 John iv.

HAVE I kept the resolution of last evening? Have I sought, in all I have done to-day, to honor my Father in Heaven? Did I, this morning, sincerely endeavor so to order the labors of the day as would most redound to His glory? Have I striven to please Him, or to work out my own pleasure? Have I thought of Him in my toil? Has it been pleasant to me to meditate that what I was doing was the labor to which God had specially appointed me, and that, in doing it, I met His favor? *Have I done that to-day, to which He appointed me?* Or, have I left His work undone, and sought my own will? Did I, with a few hasty, careless words, shuffle off my morning consecration, to pass the day forgetful of all I should have done?

Savior of our souls, I bless Thee for all that I have been enabled to do this day that has met Thy favor. Wilt Thou be pleased to forgive wherein I failed, and aid me while again I strive to walk with Thee in holiness of life and heart? O may the morrow be to us all, a day of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost—to thee especially, Associate, and to-night an hour of blessing.

Sixth.

Morning. Ps. cxix. S. T.

Evening. 1 John v.

THE life of holiness is eminently a life of faith. It is attained by faith, and cannot continue a moment without faith; faith is its very root and sap. The same faith which at first introduced the principle, preserves it. But we are not therefore to suppose the soul must always be in painful endeavor. Faith in the heart of a Christian, operates when he does not think of it, produces fruits without his consciousness. It is obvious, that holiness can only co-exist with faith.

Would you retain the state? Maintain the vital principle; watch against every tincture of unbelief; let the life you live be by the faith of the Son of God. This will keep you in constant union with God; and thus united you can never fail. Learn the secret of that wise counsel, when properly understood, "Be careful for nothing." Not that you are to be careless; but let each minute provide for itself. Let it not be supposed that you are not to act for the future, but act by the minute. God gives you the power to work; and when you work, he coworks with you and in you. So you are kept by the power of God through faith. FOSTER.

Seventh.

Morning. Ps. cxx., cxxi.

Evening. 2 John.

THE family of Christ on earth is one, even as we hope to be one in the Father's household. And if we truly have the spirit of Christ, we shall feel the joy of the "Beloved Disciple," when we learn that our brethren are walking in the truth. There is a oneness of heart and feeling which makes us rejoice with those that rejoice, and weep with those that weep.

One of the first indications which we may discover of our religious decay, most commonly, is a disinclination to free communion with our fellows. We ought never to think of shutting up divine truth within us. Like a smothered fire, it will die. It must be open. It cannot live concealed. We must do good and communicate. In thus doing, we may bless others equally with ourselves.

May the Lord of grace give us all, those precious Christian friends and associates whose lives, whose conversation, and whose counsels, shall ever fan the altar-fires of our hearts to a flame consuming every sin, and bearing up to Heaven every sacrifice. I thank Thee, Lord, for those Thou hast given me. Rest Thy blessing on them now.

Eighth.

Morning. Pa. cxxii., cxxiii.

Evening. 3 John.

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth."

There is a false and very pernicious modesty touching our own religious experience—a modesty which seldom troubles us as much elsewhere. Although professing to be pilgrims to a world of bliss; professing to love heaven and heavenly things far above all else; professing to do all for the honor and glory of God—to be striving daily to lay up treasure where moth and rust cannot corrupt; yet how seldom do we communicate to our fellow pilgrims a word of our hopes and joys, our trials or sorrows! how seldom offer them a word of consolation or encouragement!

Whether it be from a sense of reluctance to expose the inner workings of our exceeding sinful hearts, or for want of those who might appreciate our trials, and accord to us a cheering sympathy, or because our lives are so at variance with our profession, or whatever be the cause that we have never counseled with our fellow pilgrims, yet is it true that one of the richest means of grace is communion with those kindred spirits here on earth whom God always gives His children.

Ninth.

Morning. Ps. cxxiv., cxxv. Evening. Jude.

THERE is a severity in this Epistle, which fearfully depicts the degradation to which we may fall in this present life, and which startles us with terror at that retribution which awaits the ungodly in the world to come.

We feel as chaff before a whirlwind, driven resistlessly, we know not whither, to speedy and inevitable destruction. Conscious of our utter weakness, we can only say, Cover me, O Lord, from the tempest of Thy wrath. Thrice blessed He, whom, in the day of His vengeance, the Lord shall spare.

May I, O Lord, my righteous Judge, so build myself up in the most holy faith, so keep myself in the love of God, that, in the great and terrible day of the Lord, I may make Jesus my Hiding-Place and my Defence.

"Jesus, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high;
Hide me, O my Savior, hide
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the haven guide,
O receive my soul at last."

Tenth.

Morning. Ps. cxxvi., cxxvii.

Evening. Rev. i.

ASSOCIATES, as, on these closing days of the year, —so forcibly reminding us of the hasting end of life,—we come to the final book of the Blessed Word, the last of the communications from God to man, may we seek to receive these truths rather as in the spirit than in the body—rather as if we were already disenthralled from the entanglements of earth. May we strive to attain to a perception of the great facts of spiritual and eternal existence.

So permit us to understand of the things that, with us, must shortly come to pass, that earth may vanish from our affections, and the glory of the coming revelation fill our minds and hearts.

Give us, in abundant measure, of that Spirit by which we may see those things that are spiritually discerned; and so enable us "to hear the words of this prophecy," and to keep those things that are written therein, that we may be among those blessed who shall be made kings and priests unto God. As we read may the Spirit be within us! As we come again to slumber, we bow in Thy presence for forgiveness and protection. Be around us all for safety. To Thee I commend friends and enemies alike, if such I have.

Eleventh.

Morning. Ps. cxxviii., cxxix. Evening. Rev. ii.

WHAT a perfect transparency of heart and being to God, does there appear in this admonition to the angel of Ephesus! How do we appear to stand as in midday, without the shadow of an obstruction to the very bottom of our hearts! "I know thy works, thy labor and thy patience;" and against whom of us must He not add, "I have somewhat against thee"? O beloved fellow pilgrims, do not our souls in sorrow confess it? and in the depth of humiliation, do we not repent, seeking so to do the works of love that He may not remove our candlestick?

O Lord God of glory, the promises of life and blessing here made known to us, are too great for us to hope for but in that merit of Christ which has made of such unworthy creatures of the dust embryo inhabitants of heaven. Wilt Thou aid us,—especially those of us who do sincerely desire to honor Thee in our souls and bodies,—that we may be faithful unto death. May we hold fast till He shall come who hath the morning star; and may we so overcome as to eat of that hidden manna Thou shalt give! O world of light, and joy, and glory, may it be mine at last! and thine, Associates!

Twelfth.

Morning. Ps. cxxx., cxxxi.

Evening. Rev. iii.

O AGAINST how many of us must the charge lie with treble force, that our works have not been found perfect before God! What alarming reason have we to fear lest He shall come upon us unprepared, and blot out our name from the Book of Life! Yet Thou art ever merciful, O Lord, and wilt not despise those who, repenting, seek to do all that Thou hast commanded.

Help us, Thou who art our only strength, help us, that we may watch unto prayer, that, with all our might, we may strive to walk with Thee daily here, that it may be our lot—O how exceeding full of blessedness!—to walk with Thee, and all the pure and sanctified, in white hereafter.

We are not worthy, for we have defiled our garments; yet, thanks to Thee, Thou hast opened a fountain wherein we may wash and become white as snow. Daily may I plunge deeper and deeper in those cleansing waters, that I may be worthy; daily may I open my heart; and wilt Thou enter in and sup with me, that, in Thy name, and strength, and spirit, I may overcome, and, at last, sit with Thee on Thy throne.

Thirteenth.

Morning. Ps. cxxxii. Evening. Rev. iv.

THOUGH we may not be able to comprehend the significancy of all these revelations, yet, so may we be in the spirit as to gain some becoming conception of the things which shall be hereafter! May these be to us glimpses, dim and brief though they are, of the final home of the pure and blessed! May this unapproachable excellence of the Majesty on High inspire us to unwonted earnestness and labor to attain, as far as in us lies, to holiness of life, that we may be prepared to enter the abode of such purity and glory!

If we are to stand in the presence of such a Being, if we hope to abide with Him for evermore, if this exceeding honor depends on this brief span of life, how should we "rest not day and night," that we might, by any means, meet the requirements of Him who so freely offers to us these great blessings! Verily, when we remember what we were, and bethink ourselves what we are, and comprehend, even though it be but imperfectly, what we are to be, verily, may we aspire to join with the four and twenty elders in saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power."

Fourteenth.

Morning. Ps. cxxxiii., cxxxiv.

Evening. Rev. v.

O THOU that livest for ever and ever, is it possible that I, even I, may be one of those who shall join in that new song unto the Lamb who was slain for us? Associate, is it possible that thou mayest? Doth not such kindness, such honor, such exaltation, such joy, seem beyond thy soul to grasp or bear? O could we but believe that, in a few days, this was to be our exceeding great reward—nay, not reward, but the outpouring of love divine upon us—how would our hearts leap for joy at the close of each day, that we were one day nearer heaven; and each morning, that another blessed opportunity was given us to offer up those prayers which shall be gathered in the golden vials, and forever rise as accepted incense and an odor sweet!

This evening am I nearer than ever before to that land of glory! Can I look away and see it with a clearer vision? Can I catch with a distincter ear the echoes of its praises?

O blessed Jesus, Thou who art the true Light of every soul, come Thou near, and let my spirit so yield itself to Thine that I may be borne away to heaven in this evening's prayer.

Fifteenth.

Morning. Ps. cxxxv. Evening. Rev. vi.

QUIET, holy evening, how sweetly steal thy soft, sad influences around the soul! Thy hushing voice is heard, and silently falls thy dusky drapery upon the earth, as if by angel hands. At this sweet hour, O High and Holy One, when earth seems so near heaven that the spirit stops to catch the vesper notes of the angelic and redeemed, I would come and undrape my soul before Thee, nor hoping nor wishing to dissemble any of its secret thoughts. O Thou great Searcher of all hearts, help me to see mine as Thou seest it. Give me faith to apply Thine all-cleansing blood unto purity and holiness. May the angel of mercy blot out all of this day's record that is displeasing to Thee.

Never weary of its flight, the swift wing of time hurries us on to life's close. How few of the duties it brings do we meet with a cheerful heart! Let us, at this sacred hour, covenant anew with our Father in Heaven, to greater diligence and perseverance, that our spirits' flight may keep pace with time, that, when it shall end, they may fold their wings to rest within the gates of the Celestial City.

ASSOCIATE.

Sixteenth.

Morning. Ps. cxxxvi.

Evening. Rev. vii.

If those who labor most and suffer most in this life, attain to the greatest honor in the world to come, if those "which come out of great tribulation" are continually in His temple serving Him, as a special reward for their steadfast obedience and endurance, shall I need exhortation to make me willing to take up the slightest cross, and chastisement to bring me to my duties?

O how will my timid, shrinking, hesitating, fearful life appear beside such as they led! Of how much honor shall I be found worthy? How ought I, as the fathers did, to rejoice in trial, suffering, and tribulation! How ought I to seek every occasion when I might work in the name of my Master, never asking if it will be with peril! And if peril, and danger, and distress come, how ought I, instead of yielding to complaint, discouragement, and repining, to be filled with thankfulness at being counted worthy to suffer. They who suffer cheerfully are ever near the throne. These are they from whose eyes God Himself shall wipe away all tears. O could I be such, how would this world's trials vanish out of sight.

Seventeenth.

Morning. Ps. cxxxvii.

Evening. Rev. viii.

WHILE we may not be able to understand fully what events the opening of these seals, or the sounding of these trumpets, may indicate on earth, or prefigure in heaven, they are yet astonishing revelations of the Majesty and Omnipotence of the Ruler of the universe, and of our own utter feebleness, no less needful for our instruction.

Every event in the history of this world, and so from the same causes, in the history of each individual, is noted as if God and the angels were daily with us. To the powers above, earth is in the midst of heaven; and its inhabitants walk among us, as we among the flowers of the field; yet, since we see them not, heaven seems far above and distant from this lower world.

May we learn to feel and experience, in our daily walk, that God is here in His intelligence and affection, and sees, approves, and loves, the good in nature, act, and thought, as in heaven. May we appreciate more fully to our comfort, that we are compassed with a cloud of witnesses, that we go not forth alone on our pilgrimage, nor fight its battles unsustained.

Eighteenth.

Morning. Ps. cxxxviii. Evening. Rev. ix.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, the Father of mercies, source of holiness, the fountain of strength, grant me power to resist and overcome all temptations, and to guard against all dangers. I am encompassed by infirmities, surrounded by many dangerous allurements; my heart is deceitful, my passions awake, my duties are many and difficult, and my resolutions weak. O be thou unto me wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Thou hast promised thy Spirit to those who seek it. Grant that it may dwell with me; instruct, support, and encourage me in holiness, resignation, and every Christian virtue; that I, being ready prepared for every good work, may grow to the full measure of the stature and fullness of thee, my Savior. Grant that my infirmities may be fewer, and my graces stronger; so that I may walk on steadfastly in the ways of thy laws, and the works of thy commandments: and finally, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, attain to that heavenly kingdom where are fullness of joy and pleasures for evermore.

MRS. CORNWALLIS.

Nineteenth.

Morning. Ps. cxxxix. 1-12. Evening. Rev. x.

MEASURED by those cycles which beat the seconds of eternity, to what a point does life diminish—but the puff of a breath, and we shall pass away. O how soon, how very soon, at life's longest stage. O will it then be mine to look on those glories, and to rest forever with the pure and holy? What manner of life ought I then to live?

"He who has been redeemed by the blood of the Son of God, should be pure. He who is an heir of life should be holy. He who is attended by celestial beings, and who is soon, he knows not how soon, to be translated to heaven, should be holy. Are angels my attendants? then I should walk worthy of my companionship. Am I soon to go and dwell with angels? then I should be pure. Are these feet soon to tread the courts of heaven? Is this tongue soon to unite with heavenly beings in praising God? Are these eyes of mine soon to look on the throne of eternal glory, and on the ascended Redeemer? Then these feet, and eyes, and lips should be pure and holy, and I should be dead to the world, and live for heaven."

DR. BARNES.

Twentieth.

Morning. Ps. cxxxix. 13.

Evening. Rev. xi.

O LORD GOD, great and terrible, who dost reward the upright, punish the wicked, and devour thine enemies with the fire of Thy wrath, in whose hands I am as nothing, conscious at heart of my inner vileness, of my frequent departures from Thy commandments, in the name of Thine own most righteous and holy Son, I come to Thee for grace, for favor, and protection. When the storms of Thy wrath shall burst upon a guilty world, what can such a sinful and worthless creature as I, expect but to be utterly consumed?

Only one escape can there be, and this Thou hast, through Thine own goodness, proffered me. This will I accept, for this do I earnestly plead, and for this will I labor and strive. Yea, O most merciful and ever-blessed Father, all that I have, and am, and hope to be, will I, and do I bring and offer Thee as a willing, cheerful sacrifice.

O wilt Thou accept it now for the sake of Jesus, and in Thy mercy and compassion give me Thy constant and unerring guardianship. Take me, Jesus, and in whatsoever way Thou wilt, make me altogether Thine.

Twenty-first.

Morning. Ps. cxl. Evening. Rev. xii.

Of these great events we can know but little, even though we may well understand the purport of the prophecy. It will not be till we are in the spirit-world, that we shall be able to take into our contemplations the great plan and arrangements of eternity —that we shall be able to trace cause and effect in the multifarious changes of human affairs.

To our limited, earth-born vision, confusion triumphs, blind chance urges on with wild disorder the course of time, now lifting up, now casting down, now bringing nations to eminence, glory, and repose, now scattering discord, pestilence, war, and death, alike among the evil and the good, sparing none, crushing all, the guilty and the innocent. Then shall we see with a more perfect vision, comprehend with a larger understanding, feel in a purer heart, how wonderfully, from all this, hath God wrought out the salvation of a fallen world. Now our faith takes but a feeble hold of the things to be, then will our hearts rejoice in the midst of the great and glorious things that are, then will earth and humanity be seen as a perfect link in that chain which binds eternity and the universe as one harmonious whole.

Twenty-Second.

Morning. Ps. cxli. Evening. Rev. xiii.

THE year is hasting to its close; a few days more, and it will be numbered with the eternity of the past. Associates, how are we filling up the few remaining hours? Do we, at the close of each day, as we bow for worship, feel that the burden of our evening prayer is regret for duties unperformed, participated sinful pleasures, and departures from the path of rectitude? Or do we find it in our hearts to bow with thankfulness for the riches of constant grace shed forth within, lighting up the path of life, and pointing our willing souls through the straight and narrow way to the hills of Paradise? Is it our daily meat and drink to do our Master's will? Can we say, as the year thus hastens on, it has been a year of faithfulness, a year of effort to lead a pure and holy life?

Dear and cherished friend, art thou still toiling on with thine eye ever fixed on the great end of life? Is thy soul daily drawing nearer to its rest? Dost thou feel thou art going home, to thy Savior and the loved? Truly then is it well with thee. The end will shortly come. *May it bring to thee a crown!*

Twenty-Third.

Morning. Ps. cxlii. Evening. Rev. xiv.

"BLESSED are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors."

Rest! How sweet the sound! It is melody to my ears. It lies as a reviving cordial at my heart, and from thence sends forth lively spirits which beat through all the pulses of my soul! O blessed rest! when we rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty! When we shall rest from sin, but not from worship; from suffering and sorrow, but not from joy! O blessed day! When shall I rest with God? When shall I rest in the bosom of my Lord? When shall I rest in knowing, loving, rejoicing, and praising? When my perfect soul and body shall together perfectly enjoy the most perfect God! When God, who is love itself, shall perfectly love me, and rest in his love to me, as I shall rest in my love to him; and rejoice over me with joy, and over me with singing, as I shall rejoice in him. How near is that most blessed, joyful day! Though my Lord seems to delay his coming, yet a little while and he will be here.

BAXTER.

Twenty-Fourth.

Morning. Ps. cxliii. Evening. Rev. xv.

As we turn away our eyes from this sinful world, and behold, gathered on the plains of Paradise, that innumerable host which have won the victory, and hear their voices as the sound of many harps—singing the new song of Moses and the Lamb—which none but the redeemed may sing—how do we feel, with Paul, that "to depart is far better,"—that, though to live be Christ, to die is gain—or with the Psalmist, "Had I wings like a dove, I would fly away, and be at rest." Did we feel that we could safely pass that ordeal which shall try us with the searching glance of Omniscience, how gladly would we close our eyes, and pass away to the land of rest!

O Thou who only art holy, fill me, at this hour of prayer, with a more overwhelming sense of Thy majesty, Thy power, Thy greatness, Thy purity and excellence. Looking unto Thee, may Thy Spirit be absorbed into my own being till a love of holiness, and a hatred of sin, shall draw me sensibly nearer heaven. Give me to look into my own heart; and O aid me, Father Divine, to cast out every semblance of evil, and then transform me entirely into the image of my Savior.

Twenty-fifth.

Morning. Ps. cxliv. Evening. Rev. xvi.

Day of joy, day of thankfulness and gratitude! when a lost and ruined world, amid its chains of sin and darkness, of misery and crime, would fain pause and prolong the song of rejoicing angels, that the promised Savior of mankind, the Redeemer of the world, had appeared in flesh.

Though Satan hath dominion on the earth, blasting it with the poisonous breath of sin, making still a wilderness where once an Eden bloomed; and though tyrants scourge us onward, torn and bleeding, over its rough and thorny road, with a whip of scorpions, yet doth a hopeful world look up, and, on this the natal day of a Better Hope, repeat the song of Bethlehem's plain, "Peace on earth; good will towards men."

My soul, join thou the song in hope and faith; not with shouts, and mockery, and profanation, but with prayer and praise, adoration and thanksgiving; for though His glory long delay, yet shall it come. He shall yet be Prince of Peace; and earth, bowing to His gentle scepter, shall robe herself in the garments of her richest beauty, and "bud and blossom as the rose."

Twenty-Sixth.

Morning. Ps. cxlv. Evening. Rev. xvii.

ASSOCIATES, on these days, when we seek to exemplify "good will towards men," while we are bestowing and receiving expressions of kind regard, let us not forget the poor. There is a propriety in these expressions, yet should we remember "it is more blessed to give than to receive," especially to those who can make no like recompense.

The poor we have always with us. They are our brothers and sisters, but denied many blessings and comforts which we daily enjoy. With what a smile of favor must the Father of us all behold us, when, of our goods, we freely give to those who have need. How much more precious shall this be than the bestowal of costly presents to the rich! The one ministers to selfishness and pride, the other to benevolence.

Associates, while we step not needlessly aside from the forms of society, let us ask, can we not also, with our bounty, lay up treasure in heaven? Can we not meet the entire approbation of our Heavenly Father? Let us remember that Jesus has said of these very acts of clothing the naked and feeding the hungry, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto them, ye did it unto me."

Twenty-Seventh.

Morning. Ps. cxlvi. Evening. Rev. xviii.

SUCH a Babylon of riches, ease, indulgence, and sin, is this world to the Pilgrim. At every step he beholds its glittering pleasures, its gilded luxury, its dainty delicacies, hears its enchanting music, mingled with a soft silvery voice, saying, "Come, eat, drink, and be merry." The simple is beguiled, and lends a willing ear and a ravished heart; yet, even while he beholds, is her beauty turned to ashes, and her song of pleasure into mourning.

O Christian Pilgrim, hast thou left this sinful Babylon? Hast thou come out of her that thou mightest not be partaker of her sins? Hast thou, since first thine eyes beheld the New Jerusalem and its glory, and the immortal pleasures at God's right hand, hast thou, ever once, looked back with longing to the world? O look not upon her vanities, nor hearken to her enchantments, lest she beguile thee unawares; but, turning not thine eyes to right or left, keep ever in thy view that bright and cloudless world of the sanctified and holy, whose joys are as changeless as the glory and magnificence of Him who for His own pleasure made all things that are.

Twenty-Eighth.

Morning. Ps. cxlvii.

Evening. Rev. xix.

I ALSO, O Lord most high and holy, would catch the song of the heavenly harps and say, "Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honor, and power unto the Lord our God." Looking up in the hope that heaven may be *my* final home, I would learn, even now and here, its songs of praise and gratitude. I would seek to attune the harp-strings of my heart to accord with the harps of angels. Therefore aid me, O Thou who hast redeemed me, that I may walk so near to heaven that my spirit may catch its song, and my heart may ever vibrate to its echoes.

Aid me that I may daily live in that faith and obedience which may be counted unto me for righteousness. For whatsoever enjoyment heaven hath in reservation for the pure would I strive to prepare myself. Whatsoever in my heart which cannot enter there, I would, in the cleansing blood of Christ, seek to wash away. Give me more sensibly to feel that only those shall be robed in white, who have, on earth, attained to righteousness—that only those shall sing the song of the redeemed who, on earth, have learned it in their hearts—that only those that bear the cross, shall wear the crown.

Twenty-Ninth.

Morning. Ps. cxlviii. Evening. Rev. xx.

Beloved Associates, when that great and terrible day of the Lord shall come, when the dead, small and great, shall stand before God; and the books shall be opened, what a revelation will there be of our thoughts and lives! If it be a true rendering forth of that which we have done, how many unworthy actions, vile imaginations, wicked thoughts and purposes, and secret sins, will be uncovered! And if we are to be judged according to the deeds done in the body, who of us shall be able to abide the judgment?

Must all the wickedness I have done unseen, and all the sinful thoughts that I have loved, be exposed? O what shame! O what confusion! What things have I done, even since I sought to wear the robes of sincerity and uprightness! O what shame must seize me! What censure, what disapprobation of an insulted and offended God. I am overwhelmed; I cannot meet the eye of the Father, unless Thou, O blessed Savior, touch me with Thy forgiving blood, and cover me with Thy righteousness. O Thou who wast willing, vile as I am, to become my brother, wilt Thou be *my* Reconciliation and Atonement!

Thirtieth.

Morning. Ps. cxlix. Evening. Rev. xxi.

SOUL, from this mountain-top, take the Word of Truth, and cast thine eyes far away to yon shining hills, and thou shalt, with a nearer view, discern the new heavens and the new earth. O blessed land of peace, and joy, and rest! Here thou mayest never for a moment lay aside thine armor nor rest from battle; there shall thou find thy long-sought repose —here how often dost thou struggle on in darkness and in sorrow; there shall the glory of the Lord be thy light, and Jesus be thy comfort—here how often, in silent bitterness and sorrow, hast thou wept sad, gushing tears, seen only by thy Father in heaven; there shall He who has noted all the struggles of thy pilgrimage, with His own hand, wipe every tear from thine eyes.

O dost thou not see the sanctified robed in white, and God himself in the midst, resplendent with glory and munificent of blessing? and dost thou not hear Him say, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son"? O when shall I be welcomed to that Land of Bliss? O when shall I hear my Savior saying, Come?

Thirty-First.

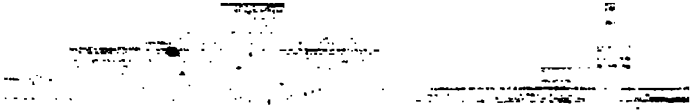
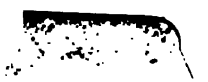
Morning. Ps. ci. Evening. Rev. xxii.

ANOTHER year is gone! Gone with its joys and smiles, its hours of love, its opportunities for good: and gone, too, forever, its labor and weariness, its care and sorrow, its tears and burden of soul. O mysterious Life! Incessant struggle of hopes and fears, expectations and disappointments, unsatisfied longings and weary waitings. O swift-fleeting Time, whither art thou bearing us? Whither on thy ceaseless flight away from the joys of the past—away from the enchanting vale of home, youth, and innocence—away from the smile and voice of the loved—away from the warm lip and throbbing bosom of affection—away from their faces, and the little green resting place where we lay them when gone—sacredest spot upon earth—away from all that the soul hath to cherish or love, O Time, whither dost thou bear us? And why wilt thou leave us nothing that nestles in our bosoms? All life's pilgrimage is tracked with the broken idols of affection, and sprinkled with tears wrung from our quivering hearts.

In the gentle moaning of this wintry wind—the dying cadence of the year, there comes a voice, 'Listen, O mortal! Earth is the nursery of Heaven.

Here every pure and beauteous thing is nurtured for hereafter. Whatever earth can bear of immortal nature, truth, virtue, goodness, wisdom, beauty, or affection, grows not for time but eternity; and when perfection blooms, I am set to bear them to the gardens of the Lord of Paradise. Because the soul, stricken of their presence, is sad and cheerless, think not they are forever gone. Look not with sorrow over the past. Go not to the tomb of the lovely, with tear-dimmed eyes and breaking heart as for the lost. The joys and loves of earth have not perished; they are but gone before thee, and thou shalt go soon.'

O Beloved Associate and Fellow Pilgrim, companion of many a weary and toilsome day, whose spirit-presence, at the hour of prayer, has ever made my weakness strong, and pointed me anew to Heaven, we may never come again to the closing page of MIZPAH. Ere then, Time may have borne one or both of us away—may it be to meet in that pure and sinless world where the soul may forever rest with the loved in the bosom of its God.

And now, O Father in Heaven, we commit ourselves to Thee. Forgive us our errors; keep us through life; and, in its last hour, O Merciful Redeemer, receive us to Thyself.

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